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IN SPITE OF EPILEPSY

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By DR. WOODS

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IN SPITE OF EPILEPSY

BEING A REVIEW OF THE LIVES OF THREE GREAT EPILEPTICS,—JULIUS CAESAR, MOHAMMED, LORD BYRON,—THE FOUNDERS RESPECTIVELY OF AN EMPIRE, A RELIGION, AND A SCHOOL OF POETRY

BY

MATTHEW WOODS, M.D.

Member of the *American Medical Association*, *The Philadelphia Psychiatric Society* and *The National Association for the Study of Epilepsy and the Care and Treatment of Epileptics*

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TO

MRS. FLORENCE EARLE COATES

As generous as a woman and as inspiring as a poet as she is discriminating in hero-worship, this appreciation of "the noblest man that ever lived in the tides of time" is dedicated by her friend,

THE AUTHOR

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PREFACE

These desultory sketches, made up of material gathered from many sources, have been written for the purpose of convincing the medical profession, the great army of discouraged epileptics, and the laity,— since everybody now seems to study at least the vagaries of medicine,— that uncomplicated epilepsy and sometimes, too, epilepsy complicated with other neuroses, as in the case of Lord Byron, is not inconsistent with a life of utility, nor even an important career.

Besides the great names mentioned in the sub-title of this book, a number of other persons in various departments of useful endeavor, from the most difficult to the least complicated, have succeeded in spite of epilepsy.

The writer during twenty-five years of special practice in this disease and its various causes has had on his consultation list, among numerous others in every walk of life, a governor of a conspicuous State, a mayor of a great city, a senator, and two members of congress, none of whom allowed their malady to stand in the way of political or civic advancement. He has also had under professional care college professors; literary workers; school-teachers; three

clergymen, one of them brilliant as scholar and orator, the others successful as pastors, and an author of profound and witty books — two of them popular enough to have been translated into foreign tongues. Among his patients have been affluent business men, musicians, organists, and other instrumental soloists, commanding leading positions and public applause.

Some of them have been entirely cured. In others suspension of convulsions and all symptoms of the disease entirely subsided during a treatment that was so mild as to be only beneficially felt. And all, even the worst, with a few exceptions, were helped.

The critical reader may remember that these simple outlines, not pretending to the dignity of finished portraits of these eminent men,— Cæsar, Mohammed, Byron, never before recognized in detail and definitely as epileptics,— were written during snatched intervals between the consultations of a busy practitioner, more deeply interested in the cure of the sick than in the writing of biographies. Much of the work was done while patients were assembling in his reception room.

If he had had more leisure, the descriptions would have been shorter,— since even manufactured brevity may be the soul of wit. The sentences would have been turned with nicer felicity, and more attention would have been given to the elegancies of literary polish, and as a matter of mere phraseological mechanics, a more careful dove-tailing of episode, allusion, and pathologic hint would have been made.

But just as they are he trusts they may have the effect of turning the minds of the laity to a more hopeful estimate of this class of sufferers. He hopes, too, that his professional brethren, who honor him by reading the book, will accept the fact that in spite of general professional incredulity many epileptics *can* be cured, that nearly all may be helped, that frequently seizures may be almost indefinitely averted and the patient restored to useful occupation, and that even in the most trying and inveterate cases it is better to persevere in hopefulness than to surrender in despair.

MATTHEW WOODS.

PHILADELPHIA, PA., *February 10, 1913.*

IN SPITE OF EPILEPSY

JULIUS CÆSAR

CHAPTER I

The presentation of these characterizations is intended as a protest against the popular view regarding the epileptic: namely,— that he is either a man no longer in the race, or by reason of physical limitations necessarily relegated to the limbo of suspended usefulness, a mere tolerated evil, because of his infirmity, hopelessly incapable of taking care of himself, and sooner or later, unless the inheritor of adequate fortune, bound to become a burden upon the State.

The fallacy of this as an all-comprehending theory has been demonstrated by history again and again. For all epileptics have not only not been burdens upon the State or the family, but to the contrary, by the mere might of great and varied capacity, just as the unafflicted, some of them have created and maintained States, conquered nations, established systems of religion, and painted masterful pictures. They have also been prominent in literary epochs, and have occupied high positions in many of the other walks of life. This, we admit, is not the rule; but it has occurred frequently enough to limit at least the plenary infallibility of the popular opinion.

The author is convinced of the injustice of this tacit declaration, if he may be allowed the use of

paradox, on the part of the medical as well as lay community who brand all epileptics as derelicts, because he personally knows many epileptics who do their useful life work with credit to themselves and benefit to the community. Because a man occasionally responds by a few minutes of unconsciousness or convulsions to certain known or unknown or but vaguely conjectured causes, just as others respond by headache, neuralgia, rheumatism, and the like, to certain undiscovered or but conjectured condition, is no reason why the one should be regarded with almost superstitious awe and alarm, looked upon askance, discouraged out of the sunlight of beneficent work into retirement and inactivity, compelled to live under a timid assumption of health, for fear of eliciting antagonism and terror, while the other, the man, for example, with a three or four hour attack of incapacitating headache every week, may declare his condition without fear of compromising himself. If he does not declare his condition with the expectation of polite sympathy he may at least do so with impunity. The fact is that the person with periodic headache ought to be the one to hesitate about hazarding publicity, because his sickness may be the result of avoidable indiscretion or excess. His headache, like dyspepsia, may be but the remorse of a guilty stomach, while epilepsy is not always avoidable, because it is often due to — we know not what. In some cases one no more unfits a man for duty than the other.

This statement, we are aware, is likely to be ac-

cepted with a shrug of incredulity, but it is nevertheless true.

We believe the time may come, because of a higher state of hygienic enlightenment, when every acquired or created disease will be regarded as a disgrace instead of as it sometimes is now,— a thing to conjure with, an assumed state, put on at times, as you put on a garment of occasion, to elicit interest or as a cover for the breaking of an engagement or the neglect of a duty. So much are we convinced of the immorality of many of our common ailments that in regard to at least one of them,— smallpox,— we have been teaching for years that the sane adult who allows himself or his children to contract such an easily prevented ailment as this is by vaccination, instead of receiving sympathy, ought to be put in jail.

But to return to the subject. Many of us now and then encounter epileptics who make independent livings, occupy positions of trust, teach in schools and colleges, support families, manage estates, and the like, as well as occupy the minor places of life, without compromising themselves or slighting their employment. One of the best wood-carvers we have ever known,— a man who did original work for the big architects, supporting a wife and three children,— was an epileptic from boyhood. Another attained the position of governor of a State. Another held an important legal position in a large city, was a prominent lawyer, carrying difficult cases to successful issues. Another was a clergyman of powerful intellect and

convincing eloquence. Another was a voluminous author, with some of his books translated into foreign tongues. One of the worst examples we have ever known to get well, a man who in fifty years had had twenty-eight thousand convulsions, besides numerous psychic attacks, managed his own ample estate and his home with prudence. This of course was very exceptional as was also his complete cure.

It would be possible, we imagine, for many of us to select from our own case-books,— especially if we followed our patients into their private lives,— illustrations just as interesting. And if it were not for the misery-producing bias against fits we could give names of persons who in spite of epilepsy were efficient in various vocations.

Many distempers are objects of sympathetic concern in these tolerant days, when everybody seems interested in the study of medicine. Yet, notwithstanding the fact of the great multitude of medical amateurs, if a man happens to be a victim of the malady that has been contemporary with all ages, if mentioned at all, it is only under the breath, just as in the days of rampant superstition when to be an epileptic was to be possessed of demons. Still, although a man be dead, because of this prejudice it is not well even then to speak of him by name as a victim of epilepsy for fear of hurting the susceptibilities of survivors.

Of epileptics long dead we may speak openly. And the three men of supreme intellect whom we have

selected as illustrious examples, and who in spite of epilepsy have achieved universal prominence in the great things of life, the things worth while, we need not hesitate to bring to notice by name, because there is no possibility, except in one instance, of compromising their descendants. We allude to Julius Cæsar, Mohammed, and Lord Byron,— the founders, respectively, of an Empire, a Religion, and a School of Poetry.

CHAPTER II

As a first illustration of an epileptic with every faculty apparently unimpaired, we will begin with Cæsar. According to Plutarch, he "was of slender make, fair of feature, pale, emaciated, of a delicate constitution, subject to severe headache and violent attacks of epilepsy." He was born on the twelfth of July, about one hundred years before the birth of Christ. Even in his seventeenth year he was so conspicuous a person that he broke his engagement with one woman, although she was of consular and opulent family, to marry another, Cornelia, daughter of the celebrated Cinna. In consequence of this alliance he was made *Flamen Dialis,* or priest of Jupiter, an office which with this exception was only given to persons of mature years.

It is singular in this connection that of the three persons we have selected in elucidation of our theory, the two monogamous men were notable for precocious love-affairs, while the polygamous one,— Mohammed, —did not fall in love until his twenty-ninth year, and then with a quiet, middle-aged widow, fifteen years his senior. Unlike the other two, Christian and pagan, respectively, he lived loyally with her for twenty-two years — until her death.

So important as a prospective enemy was Cæsar

even then that the dictator Sulla at once proscribed him. Thus outlawed, a boy, yet a married man, he was taken ill, it would seem, with a series of epileptic convulsions,— *status epilepticus*,— and only escaped death while fleeing from the enemy by being concealed as an invalid in a litter.

As an illustration of unconquerable courage and of being able at this early age to take care of himself is the fact that during this period of outlawry he was captured by Cilician pirates,— men who thought murder a trifle,— who held him for ransom. He remained with them a prisoner thirty-eight days, until his ransom came, and in this position of imminent danger — between Scylla and Charybdis — he showed heroic coolness and courage. His captors demanded twenty talents of ransom. He laughed at the smallness of the amount and insisted on its being fifty,— about seventy-five thousand dollars.

During the time of captivity, instead of his being in a state of intimidation, as might be supposed, he seems to have assumed command of the entire band of ship scuttlers and cutthroats. It was his practice then and all through his life to indulge in a short sleep after dinner, a custom which he characteristically declined to abandon, even when under the dangerous condition of duress. During this siesta he invariably insisted on silence, and otherwise treated his custodians as if they were his paid body-guards instead of his captors. He joined on occasion in their diversions, and instead of spending the time of waiting in anxious sus-

pense and idleness, he wrote poems and orations, rehearsed them to his captors, and when they failed to show appreciation called them " dunces and numskulls untouched by sentiment or intelligence."

Although his genius at this early period was only evolving, yet so attached was he to things intellectual even then, so devoted to the extension of the higher culture, that we believe he would even have started a Browning society among his obsequious yet amused assassins, if Browning had been sufficiently previous.

Can we not imagine after the labor of the day his surprised and subdued jailors sitting around with their hands in their pockets,— if they had pockets in those days of the toga and seminakedness,— while their youthful prisoner declaimed orations to them to the accompaniment of brine-laden breezes, or breathed into their hairy ears love poems and sonnets by way of contrast? Is it possible for an extravagant imagination to conceive anything more incongruous? He even threatened to crucify his captors, a favored diversion in those dear old days, if they did not pay him proper deference. They, the historian tells us, looked upon it all as a joke. This boy captive threatened his not too captivating captors with capital punishment until after his release, when collecting a fleet of ships at Miletus, he did return, and took them prisoners. He also took all their valuables, *including the money paid for his own ransom,* and actually did crucify at Pergamos all the prisoners he had taken, according to promise. He never failed to keep his word.

His insistence on their demanding a larger ransom was not so bad — for an epileptic. Prudence ever thus commands the forces of the future.

Yet we are told that Cæsar was not cruel, that this was but mere playfulness, like a kitten with a mouse, or a terrier with a rat, that he only had that disregard for human life which was of the period rather than of the man. In spite of this vindictiveness as a boy, he subsequently in his victories exercised great clemency for those times, when no quarter was shown the vanquished. So noted for clemency was he that he was called by way of distinction "the lenient conqueror." In the cutting of the throats even of friends in those barbarous days there seems to have been no "compunctious visitings of conscience," not even regret; indeed conscience seems to be a modern invention, anyhow.

After this boyish escapade Cæsar went to Rhodes to study rhetoric, having as fellow-students Cicero and Mark Antony, and was so successful as a student that he afterward became known as the second orator of Rome, only because Cicero was the first. In spite of his infirmity and semi-invalidism, success in any career seemed possible to him, for he had excessive persistence and seems to have been among the earliest of those who lived actively and simultaneously the physical and the intellectual life, a commendable but rare combination. Upon his return from his studies he impeached Dolabella for misdemeanor in office, and Publius Antonius for corruption, and was so convincing as a pleader that the defendants were compelled

to appeal to the tribunes of the people. This he did merely by way of trying his forensic wings, and to show that his oratory, unlike the ordinary sort, was more than vocabulary.

Plutarch tells us that the eloquence he exhibited in Rome in also defending persons implicated in crime gained for him a considerable interest. His sword was double-edged. His engaging address and conservatism carried the heart of the people, " for he had a condescension to his elders not to be expected in so young a man." What our Jeremiahs lament as the lost art of deferential respect for the white head seems by this time to have extended to the Imperial City, since this solitary instance of the opposite was exceptional enough to be put upon record.

We ourselves never could see that there was anything specially honorable in gray locks, rather there is dishonor in them unless their owner has done something commendable during his evidently long life. The frosty pole does not always imply venerableness, often the opposite. We know the possessors of not a few such who ought rather to be tarred and feathered than revered,— wretches, decrepit in iniquity, their white heads but emphasizing protracted depravity, a flag of but pretentious truce floating over impotent and incapable tyranny. When gray hair means a life spent in the service of man it's different.

But to return to Cæsar. He jilted the first woman he was engaged to, although she was of powerful family, and he divorced the next one, Cornelia,— the

divorce is not an American invention,— not because she was guilty but because she was accused of guilt. "Cæsar's wife," he said, "must be above suspicion." He pronounced publicly, contrary to custom, heart-rending panegyrics over his next two wives, then retired with his varied wedlock experiences into well-earned freedom, where he remained, with the exception of a few lapses, during the remainder of his life.

We have wondered why Balzac in his book, "The Petty Annoyances of Married Life," did not mention Cæsar among his illustrations, with his varied nuptial experiences and personal knowledge of the subject of "how to be happy though married." If he had included him among his examples of gracious submission to petty domestic annoyances he would, we imagine, have shown the justice of adding at least another leaf to the laurel crown that covered the bald head of our hero. It would be of interest, too, to know with what degree of tolerance his various wives regarded his convulsions, and how the community regarded them,— what effect, for instance, Cæsar's last fit in the presence of his delegates was likely to have on the coming election. If at a public gathering in ancient Rome a man happened to have a convulsion, no matter how important the meeting, it was immediately dispersed. And how were his soldiers affected by their commander's having a seizure at the beginning of a campaign, at the end of a battle, or while making love, after the pagan custom of the period, to a brand-new sweetheart?

In some of our States epilepsy is a cause for divorce. Cæsar, the epileptic, to the contrary, bounced the non-epileptic.

To be just and generous we must give Cæsar credit for never having cut off the heads of his discredited wives as our burly "Defender of the Faith" did. He more humanely, perhaps, gave them legal authority to marry again, so that he gained their respect rather than incurred their displeasure.

He contracted debts equal to a million and a half dollars before getting remunerative employment, and when elected *edile,* not only paid for the contests of three hundred and twenty pairs of gladiators with other people's money,— a custom it would seem still in vogue,—but in all other diversions outdid precedent. To paraphrase from Sir Joshua, was ever epileptic so trusted?

He would seem to have rested but little either day or night. Continuing rapidly from one point of political importance to another at last he united with Pompey and Cassius, forming the alliance known as the First Triumvirate, and obtained for himself by popular vote governmental control in Cisalpine Gaul, Transalpine Gaul, and Illyricum.

Both by valor and eloquence he thus obtained the highest reputation in the field and in the Senate. "Beloved and esteemed by his fellow-citizens," writes Suetonius, "he enjoyed successively every magisterial and military honor the state could give, consistent with its constitution."

Thus this man,— who was an exquisite, a politician, a poet, an orator, a married man, and an epileptic at eighteen, and a universal conqueror and master in literature, oratory, and statesmanship at forty,— instead of being a burden upon the state, or a menace to the prosperity of his family, enriched the state by invading and making tributary foreign powers without apparently making enemies of the vanquished, a feat in itself, extended its dominion, increased its influence, and at last, as Cassius said, "had grown so great that he bestrode the narrow world like a colossus," and scorned to have a rival in the management of the whole earth.

Says Mark Antony, who had evidently seen him in convulsions: "When the fit was on I marked how he did shake; 'tis true this god did shake." Again, "Ye gods, it doth amaze me a man of such a feeble temper should so get the start of the majestic world and bear the palm alone."

This, to be sure, is but Shakespeare; but it is true to the facts as recorded by historians.

We would hardly recommend horseback riding to an epileptic, "but by dint of perseverance," says the historian Oppius, "Cæsar became an expert horseman, often dictating to two or three secretaries at once while in the saddle, and rode without using his hands," which we are assured he could do with his horse at full speed. We would have thought this statement fabulous, the friendly exaggeration of an ardent admirer, but we have had a somewhat similar experience in our own practice. Mr. A. H., of Germantown, Pa., had con-

vulsions daily for many years, and during the time he was undergoing care at our hands insisted on taking up as an occupation the "breaking" of wild western horses, a practice that he followed, as Cæsar did horseback riding, without accident. For the last four years this gentleman, unlike Cæsar, has given up both epilepsy and horse-training.

It was Cæsar, too,— for his genius was inventive as well as military,— who first wrote personal letters to people living in the same city, in order to expedite business, thus avoiding the ordinary flippancies and other impedimenta of personal interview.

The reader, we trust, will excuse these prolixities. They seem to us necessary in order to exhibit the activity even in minutiæ of unimpaired faculty running parallel with a serious nervous disease, and also to show that heroism and a life of toil, hardship, and multifarious accomplishments are not inconsistent with uncomplicated epilepsy, or even with epilepsy complicated with other diseases as this was. It is necessary, too, to give details in order to be in a position to encourage epileptics, even when they cannot be altogether cured, to feel that it may be possible in spite of their handicap to outstrip in usefulness those who started with them in the race of life.

We have in our possession the school certificate of a boy who four years ago was sent to us by a brother physician as a "nervous wreck." His condition was due as much to enforced idleness, exemption from study, and artificially engendered fear as it was to con-

vulsions. Although he averaged eight convulsions a month, we recommended his being returned to school and being put merely on a controlled diet, with treatment to counteract dietary and other errors. The result was that the patient skipped a whole division in his studies and has had but one convulsion since he came to us, which was due to dietary disobedience. He was admitted last September into the Southern Manual Training School without examination, and although absent three weeks because of other sickness, he received, as may be shown, the following certificate: "English, Latin, History, Algebra, German, Science, Constructive Drawing, Free-hand Drawing, Joining, Tinsmithing, Penmanship, Commercial Arithmetic,—satisfactory in every respect."

This boy, six feet two inches tall, in his eighteenth year, who has now gone four years and six months without convulsions or other signs of epilepsy, has escaped forever being discouraged by sympathetic friends into perpetual ignorance and uselessness, which is the next thing to if not worse than death.

It is because of the lack of proper management rather than of medication that the ordinary reflex convulsions of childhood and adolescence sometimes develop into epilepsy. Skillful hygienic and psychic surveillance of such children without much medicine would often prevent such patients from acquiring the epileptic habit, for it does sometimes appear as an acquired habit, especially in cases of high-strung hysterical persons. Again it may be intercurrent; that is to

say, coming in the wake of some previously present disease or condition, the removal of which cures the epilepsy.

But to return again to our waiting Cæsar. He never but once made his infirmity an excuse for anything that happened or a reason for the avoidance of duty, as he might have done.

Even when he came to unbridged rivers during his campaigns he swam across them, sometimes helped by inflated bladders, but usually unaided. Once, having a seizure in the water, he cried out, you remember, "Help me, Cassius, or I perish!"

He explored personally and afoot conquered cities, accompanied by way of precaution by but one or two servants,— an admirable precaution for epileptics, when at all possible. If the company of a servant or friend is not available, then epileptics should always carry a card in their wallet, giving name and address and announcing the particulars of their ailment. Because of not having taken this precaution many an innocent person, in spite of incoherent remonstrance, has been marched off to a police station and locked up with criminals. This is more likely to occur after the convulsion, when the patient, having regained the upright position, attempts to walk. The unsteady gait, vacant gaze, disordered and soiled clothing, are so suggestive of helpless intoxication that you can hardly expect the officer, even with best intentions, to distinguish between inebriety and the immediate sequelæ of an attack of epileptic convulsions.

As an illustration of his rapidity of movement, at the battle of Thrapsus when Scipio was constructing ramparts Cæsar made his way into an almost impenetrably wooded country and utterly routed him, putting the whole army of this experienced veteran to flight. And as if that were not enough for one day, he took the entire camp of Afranius, destroyed that of the Numidians, their King Jubba barely escaping with his life, and thus in twenty-four hours made himself the master of three camps, with their enormous booty in silver and gold, killed fifty thousand of the enemy, with a loss to himself of only fifty men.

After this battle, while drawing up his army and giving orders, he had an attack, Plutarch tells us, of "his old distemper"—and do you wonder? Before it had time to overpower him, he directed his men, Plutarch continues, to carry him to a neighboring tower until the fit was over.

He seems usually to have had premonitions of his seizures, and must also have connected them with either gastric or intestinal disturbance, as indicated also in the case of Lord Byron, hence his excessive abstemiousness, except on rare occasions. Yet, in spite of all, during his life he won and put upon record three hundred and twenty triumphs, to say nothing of his orations, his history, and the number of destroyed cities he rebuilt.

CHAPTER III

"CÆSAR," says M. Ophelott,— see his *Mélanges Philosophiques,*—"had one predominant passion. It was love of glory; and he passed forty years of his life in seeking opportunities to foster and encourage it. His soul, entirely absorbed in ambition, did not open itself to other impulses."

This opinion, notwithstanding the fact of Cæsar's having extravagantly declared that he "would rather be first in a village than second in Rome," has been rejected by subsequent writers.

"We must not imagine," says the same writer, "that Cæsar was born a warrior as Sophocles and Milton were born poets, for if nature had made him a citizen of Syria, he would have been the most voluptuous of men." "If in our day he had been born in Pennsylvania, he would have been the most inoffensive of Quakers and would not have disturbed the tranquillity of the New World." He continues, "Nature formed in the same mould Cæsar, Mahomet, Cromwell, and Kublai-Khan! Had Cæsar been placed in Persia, he would have made the conquest of India; in Arabia, he would have been the founder of a new religion; in London, he would have stabbed his sovereign or procured his assassination under the sanction of law."

Such conjectures are gratuitous, and might be continued about any prominent man endlessly, but, as

the old lady, old in wretchedness, said about sympathy: "It cost nothing and is good for nothing."

We will say nothing about Cæsar's conquests in Britain and Gaul and of his Commentaries telling about them for fear of harrowing up old sorrows and renewing again the wretchedness of our otherwise happy youth, for we cannot all agree with what George Barrow, in "Lavengro," said of Old Parr, "He flogged Greek and Latin into me until I loved him."

You remember how Cæsar constructed the supposed impossibility of a bridge across the rapidly running Rhine in ten days, and created a buttressed barrier above it to break its destructive current; how with rude, untutored soldiers he did it, and how it took us longer to read intelligently his concise account of the engineering feat than it did him to make a way for his army across the otherwise impassable river. It was Heine, while a student, who said: "I know now why the ancient Romans accomplished so much — some of them, too, before they had attained manhood. It was because they did not have to stop on the way to study Latin."

Both by accomplishment and affability, notwithstanding M. Ophelott's strictures, our hero won all hearts. His consideration for people was familiar, almost fatherly. He was said to have known personally every soldier in his army and to have been able to call each of them by name. He was interested in their recreations as well as in their capacity for effective work, and at least on one occasion participated

personally in their sports. People were attracted to him as the seed of the bulrush is attracted to water.

Even his quondam enemy Cleopatra, after he had conquered Greece and reduced Egypt, learning that he desired to see her, instead of waiting for him to make at least the first call, as a modest young lady should, got into a boat in the dusk of the evening — without even a chaperone, think of it! — and made for his quarters, taking with her but one attendant. Realizing soon the difficulty of entering the palace undetected, she had her companion, Appolodore, roll her up in a carpet, like a bale of rugs, and carry her on his back through the gates to Cæsar. It was because of this comic opera stratagem and the charm and beauty of her conversation — they both spoke Greek — and not because of any ordinary affair of state, as the merely materialistic historian believes who thinks there is no truth but facts, that caused Cæsar afterward to insist on her ruling with him. The subsequent birth of their daughter Cæsario showed how invincible he was both in love and in war.

Can you not imagine, then, with the effect of this brilliant epileptic's achievements extending over the civilized world, how different it might have been with us, even in far away America, if when a boy his mother had put him as unfit for life into a sanitarium for epileptics, or if the family physician had drenched and stupefied him daily with saturated solutions of bromide of potassium? It would have changed the face of history and made many of the great events of the modern world impossible.

CHAPTER IV

In exhibiting the mental inventory of a man, in order to know him really, it is necessary, as we have intimated before, to include among the greater things the minutiæ,— little personal peculiarities, eccentricities, pastimes, how he acts while pursuing the even tenor of his way as well as during the torrents, the tempests, and we might say the whirlwinds of his life, the addictions of his spare moments, what he does when at leisure, and the like.

A man's profession or occupation may be an accident, or selected without his volition, because of family interest or preference. He may have been coerced into a vocation by peculiar circumstances; but his pastimes, the predilections of his leisure, the employments of a man's spare moments, may tell more about him than the more conspicuous activities of his public career. We labor often at uncongenial tasks that we may afterward pursue our heart's desire, to obtain leisure and means for private pursuits being often but the ultimatum of public effort.

Who does not know Luther better in his "Table Talk" than in his "Sermons" and the belligerencies of his turbulent life? Selden's "Discourses" present a truer picture of the man,— his wit, learning, credulity, logical reasoning, and scholarly versatility,— than

could any record of his public works. The "Golden Book" of Marcus Aurelius reveals his spiritual preferences and character better than the most stately history could without them. Ben Jonson's "Timber" is perhaps more self-revealing, especially in his attitude toward his contemporaries, than his serious life-work. More's "Utopia," the work of his leisure, makes known more of the inner man, his real convictions and aspirations, than any public life could. And Malory's "La Morte D'Arthur," while talking seriously of legends, teaches more than Malory, folk-lore, the manners and customs of his time, and it also teaches more history than would many stately tomes devoted to that noble science.

Grote and Rogers were bankers that they might be, respectively, historian and poet; Hugh Miller worked at stone-cutting that he might become a geologist; Spinoza was a polisher of lenses in order to dedicate his leisure to philosophy; Hunter practiced medicine to gain the guinea that enabled him to devote his day to research; Elihu Burrit worked as a blacksmith that he might in his privacy study languages. It is by his "Hesperides" and "Noble Numbers," and not by his sermons, that we know the clergyman Herrick; Sir John Lubbock is discovered in "The Pleasures of Life," the work of learned leisure, rather than by his commercial successes, his legitimate life-work, and Goethe reveals himself more in "Gespräche mit Goethe" of Eckermann rather than in his proclaimed productions for the people.

We remember coming across an expression somewhere, perhaps in Plutarch, about Cicero,— that in walking he clasped his fingers behind his back, and that they were always nervously twitching, as if emphasizing we then supposed the telling parts of some prospective oration against Mark Antony,— and these orations, by the way, were the cause of his death. And this simple fact, or some personal revelation in some of his writings, has added to our knowledge of the man who at the age of sixteen assumed "the manly gown," and who was made rich by the unparalleled gifts of clients and admirers, most of whom did not wait until their death to show their appreciation. Yet he regarded life as the mere moving of a weaver's shuttle, not aware of the design upon which it was working, and he confessed even in the zenith of his fame that he did not know which was best, life or death.

It is thus the casual and unpremeditated, the mere whims and eccentricities, the private acts and words spoken in house-coat and slippers, and not always the moment when men are bending themselves with valor against the obstinate tasks of life, that tell of the real man. "The little folly," Shakespeare says, "that wise men do make a great show."

In justification, then, of our interest in trifling personal peculiarities as indication of the pan-sanities of life we may say with Terence, *Homo sum: humani a me nihil alienum puto.*

Apologizing for keeping the subject of our review

waiting in our anteroom, as Chesterfield kept Dr. Johnson, while attending to less worthy visitors, as a patient of distinction, we will take his temperature, percuss and oscult him once more, or like a lovingly edited book, pick him up again for more careful revision.

Although by no means a valetudinarian, yet in every way Cæsar was careful of his health and the cosmetic management of his body, even to the point of squeamishness, else his infirmity might have cut short his career or diminished its brilliancy. He needed to be careful. If he had lived in the gluttonous days of Caligula or Nero, and had to any extent indulged in their dietary excesses, he never would have crossed the Rubicon nor effected the important victory over Pompey the Great at Pharsalia, and the protests of his nervous system in the way of convulsions would have been more numerous.

He rather confined his indulgencies to certain periods, with long stretches of intervening abstemiousness,— see Anthony Trollope's "Cæsar,"— and looked after his body with the strictest exactitude.

After the custom of the period among persons of his class he perfumed himself sometimes twice daily, with a not too scrupulous aid of his attendant, and was as careful of his complexion and the flexibility of his muscles as an acrobat or ballet-dancer. Just the mere act of living, notwithstanding the delicacy of his constitution, was luxury to him, and the exuberance of the bath and its details, pagan that he was, was a de-

CAIUS JULIUS CÆSAR

This contemporary portrait of Cæsar, for which in all probability he sat, is very interesting because it unmistakably exhibits the *Facies Epilepticus*. The original is in the Museum of Naples.

Facing p. 40.

light. Unlike certain medieval religionists, who regarded bathing wicked and immodest, and consequently never resorted to it, the bath was one of his few luxuries.

He paid the strictest attention to his hair, although he had so little of it. In spite of portraits and busts to the contrary — few of those known to us being by contemporaries — it only grew in a narrow fringe low down on the back of his head, like reversed Gladstone or John Tyndall whiskers, instead of under the chin under the occiput. Yet, like the rest of the bald-headed the world over, he allowed this occipital fringe to grow long, and boldly combed it forward, like a vine over a blank wall, in the vain hope of concealing his cranial nakedness,— the touch of nature that makes the whole bald world kin. Addison poetically said that Cæsar being bald covered his head with laurels, and he was even vain enough, Gibbon writes, to wear this laurel covering in public.

The care he exercised toward the protection of the hair of his head he extended to the destruction of the superfluous hair of his body, which he had painfully removed, like a Chinese mandarin or a North American Indian, with tweezers. This afforded his attendants of the bath the opportunity of rubbing his hair-denuded cuticle until it shone, a contemporary said, "like alabaster or polished marble."

Suetonius writes of "the shiny whiteness of his ivory-tinted epidermis," which was evidently the anemia of his disease, and the "cheerfulness and

seemliness of his well-groomed features." This phrase, "well-groomed," applied to the masculine toilet, as you see, is at least nineteen hundred years old.

"He was more economic of time," we are told, "than of money," and recognized, too, at this primitive hygienic age, the importance of proper food and rest.

He always, as you may remember, took a nap after dinner, which may have accounted for his almost uniform affability under the most trying circumstances, for he could order the head to be removed from the shoulders of an old friend as graciously as if conferring a favor. He had so many projects on hand at the same time as not to be very much overwhelmed by the miscarriage of any one of them, a thing that very seldom happened. And although he was so energetic and of such constant activity, unlike most busy men he was nearly all the time leisurely suave and considerate to the point of effeminacy.

With the pavidity of a supersensitive woman — the part of his make-up emphasized by Donatello in his profile portrait — he had the fearless courage of a lion. He was without a thought of loss, for he never failed to believe in himself. He feared no one, not even his own invincible legions, whom he would turn upon on the slightest provocation, quelling rebellion by a phrase, and reducing the most belligerent to obedience and humiliation by a word.

In the Commentaries, as the reader knows, he al-

ways speaks of himself in the third person, Cæsar, and does so just as he would speak of anyone else, not boastingly, but simply telling of his own exploits as he would those of others. And he does it, too, in such a clear and concise way that you feel that he is but stating the truth and that he has seen and experienced all he expresses.

The Romans were cruel beyond the credibility of the people of to-day, who regard life sacred and murder the greatest crime. In this particular Cæsar was also guilty to a frightful extent; yet he won, as we have seen, the reputation of having a nature of unusual clemency. He never, though, committed murder, as you might say Nero did, for the love of it. He slaughtered none but for policy; yet this heroic man, with the fantastic delicacy of a euphemistic female, put to death hundreds, whole cities, including women and children, without a pang, when he felt it necessary to the success of his undertakings. This was not because of his being an epileptic. It was the policy and practice of the period, and he did not always rise above it. We say the ancients were cruel, and pagans pitiless, but were they more so than the people of the Middle Ages, when the world was unitedly Christian, before "heresy" split it into parts?

It was in the "Ages of Faith," not before Christianity, that "the most Christian King of the Franks," Charlemagne, after one battle alone put to relentless death four thousand five hundred

cowed captives "*for the love of God.*" At the command of a despot as implacable as himself he invaded without cause vast territories, compelling the inhabitants to submit either to death or baptism, unmercifully pillaged cities and set fire to unarmed villages, sparing neither age, sex, nor condition. Yet, it would seem, because he could write Latin and speak Greek and even "*attempted* to compose a grammar," and besides "opened a school in his own palace for the education of the children of his servants"— many of them were his own, for continence was not one of his virtues — subsequent writers, repeating one another like sheep in an only trail, have called him "good and great."

Now when our amiable millionaires, who neither commit murder nor arson, but to the contrary endow colleges and erect libraries, hospitals for the forlorn, and homes for the indigent, the people that praise Charlemagne call them murderers and robbers.

Thus "wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile" and scribbling gentility stultifies itself before a frowning Providence.

No man ever accomplished more in his own person than Cæsar, and no man ever did so many things so well, outside of what might be called his own profession,— arms.

He not only created and *personally* enlisted his army, but literally led it. Legion and legion he collected individually by the force of his own character, and he personally managed the distribution of the enormous quantities of plunder, with which he allured

his soldiers to abnormal valor. He held himself also personally responsible for every detail of camp life, and at the same time managed the perplexing politics of Rome, where he had many enemies, among them Pompey the Great, his son-in-law, the man who, some one has said, got up the first " corner " in wheat, which was enough without anything else to distinguish him.

From the beginning of the Gallic war until his assassination he was fighting for his life, every year but one. Yet his works, including his history, went on; and the literary style of it was so fine, indicating persistent polishing, that it elicited praise from all the great critics of Rome, at a time, too, when concerning literature Rome, like Iago, was nothing if not critical.

In those days when literature was held in such high esteem, Cicero wrote, *Vereor ut hoc, quod dicam, perinde intellegi possit auditum atque ipse cogitans sentio.* Sixteen hundred years afterward, Montaigne, who, as everybody knows, was a good judge of Latin and a great admirer of Cæsar, said, " I read this author with somewhat more reverence and respect than is usually allowed human writings, at one time considering him in his person by his actions and miraculous greatness, and at another in the purity and inimitable polish of his language and style, wherein he not only excels all other historians, as Cicero confesses, but peradventure even Cicero himself." See Florio's " Montaigne," where he speaks with such garrulous enthusiasm about the great Julius.

Shakespeare, who seems more than any man to have

been dowered with omniscience, makes Cymbeline say, "We may have many Cæsars, but never another Julius."

In contemplating the greatness and versatility of this marvelous man we have imagined, as hero-worshiper and physician alike, what an honor it would have been to have had him as a patient. He was as deferential to his medical attendant as a mediæval king to his confidential poisoner, *when everything went well;* but in case of the opposite he was as likely to call to his aid his private and particular assassin to rid him of an enemy who was "not fit to doctor a cat." For the white man *is* uncertain. On one occasion he had a servant he was attached to instantly put to death because of his having been guilty of a not unusual breach of domestic ethics.

Yet the position of physician might have been different and worth the risk. Think of its glorious functions! — advising one of the greatest men the world has ever known, and that man a semi-invalid, "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," against the folly of polypharmacy; keeping off knavish Augurs, animal therapy advocates, and nostrum venders, and a hundred best cures for epilepsy, "made in Germany,"— protecting him against the allurements of specious quackery in any form; traveling with him through conquered cities, getting acquainted with unknown climates, manners, customs, meeting barbarous races of men; aiding Sallust, or whoever he was, in proof-reading the Commentaries, which must have required many

revisions to have attained their present precise perfection, facilitating their easier interpretation for future schoolboys, thus adding to the felicity of unborn nations, besides participating in all the wild exhilarating life of the open camp. Perhaps, too, his physician would have had the pleasure of spending quiet evenings with him in the companionship of the few intimates he affected,— orators, artists, literary men, philosophers. For, as well as fields of carnage and slaughter, he must have had gardens of the Hesperides too, where he met his friends, and talked confidences, and expressed and exhibited affection. Since there is time, there *must* be in every career social amenities and laughter as well as tears, asphodel meadows as well as Gethsemanes.

CHAPTER V

THE attention given by Cæsar to personal adornment may be considered unworthy of so great a man. During the time of the "Decline" such effeminacies as we have enumerated were subjects of reprobation by censors and poets alike. Yet it was the custom in those days, especially among persons of the higher Roman classes who were still greatly influenced by Greek culture, physical and otherwise, and Persian too, perhaps, to regard the body and its beauty as something divine and demanding sedulous care and attention.

Cicero and many prominent Romans were by education more Greek than Roman. The gods with them were always beautiful, if not always exercising beautiful restraint. Yet divinity did not have the same meaning then as now; it was altogether anthropomorphic. Their deities, too, were often grossly human, but seldom ugly: Silenus, Bacchus, Sators, and Fauns, symbolizing even their grossest activities, presented characteristic comeliness.

The popular question then was, "Is it beautiful?" Physical beauty justified all things, even immorality. Now we ask, "Is it right?"

Then the æsthetic occupied the prominent place in public and private affairs; now the ethical. Then it

was the man who had left the world without having seen the Jupiter Olympus of Phidias who was thought to have been deprived of his inheritance, for even the sight of a beautiful object was an asset of value; now it is the man who has not been a good Samaritan, who fails to exercise the altruistic prerogative, who suffers loss. Thus are illustrated different viewpoints,— the one an inheritance from the Greeks, the other from the Jews. For morality as we understand it, as we have been taught by the chosen people, was then a *terra incognita*; the moral faculty atrophied for lack of use, so that such a thing as a passion for humanity or righteousness was unknown, or almost unknown.

Mark Antony ordered his favorite murderer,— about to start in pursuit of his schoolfellow and former friend,— when he found him "to cut off his head and hands and bring them to him." That schoolfellow and former friend was the fugitive orator and author, Cicero,— that same Cicero that defended the cause of Sicily against Verres, and that was but a few days before the darling of the people. The order was carried out, and the head and hands of Cicero were brought to Rome and treated by Antony and his wife with barbarous indignity, without eliciting special horror or disapprobation.

Now if a man cruelly prolongs the death of a rat he is put in prison or fined, unless he be a king of Belgium, when he may cut off human hands with impunity.

The best people in those days — see Taine's

"L'Art" — devoted much of their time to the development of personal comeliness, as a religious duty. The cultivation of the beautiful was a popular science; the different parts of the ideal body were reduced to definite measurements, a standard of grace was imagined, the attainment of which, like the points of a "ten thousand dollar hen" or a "bust in butter" with us, was the subject of popular applause. Did you ever see Ruskin's "self-made man and the Apollo Belvedere"? Just as the religious with us dedicate their days to charity and good works so they dedicated theirs to the development of grace and symmetry. So Cæsar in the care of his attenuated body but followed the mode.

Indeed, it would seem from the atmosphere of man-created beauty that surrounded them that the things that we as a nation are but beginning to know they absorbed from their infancy. A desire for every sort of beauty was almost an instinct with them. Love of the beautiful in art is not essential to Christianity, which has to do rather with righteousness, but is an inheritance from older peoples, including the Greeks, the Romans, and the Saracens. Everything must be beautiful, from a broom-handle to a coronet; from the prow of a ship to the buckle of a sandal; from the head of a hand-made nail, with which they fastened together two pieces of wood, marble, or bronze, to the frieze of a temple; from the earthen receptacle for the oil with which they anointed their bodies daily to the incinerary urns that held the ashes of the departed.

Baths were not so much for cleanliness as luxury,

and physical exercise was not practiced so much for health as comeliness, not so much for strength as translucency of integument and pulchritude.

A physical blemish was worse than a notorious vice. Hence where they had perfection of art and æsthetic magnificence, such as temples of the winds, and parthenons, and pantheons, and buildings of unparalleled and transcendent splendor to every known and unknown god, we have orphan asylums, and hospitals, and homes for the aged, and reformatories, and libraries, and free schools, and country weeks, and epileptic colonies, and insane asylums, and every variety of altruistic activity, even to the point of embarrassing abundance. Defectives that they put to death we house in palaces and wait on like willing slaves, and feebleness with us makes a stronger appeal than strength and forcefulness. Christianity has made the difference.

Cæsar was also particular about not only the sanitary but the artistic care of his hands and feet, and treated them as important members of the physical commonwealth, worthy of all honor. And he was as squeamish about his food as a chlorotic girl. Like all the exquisites of his moment, he was fastidious not only about his garments but about the draping of them. The folds, we are told, had to fall gracefully, no matter how much practice it took to make them do so, and in private and public life he managed his raiment with the skill of a tragedian or prima donna.

Donatello, as we have intimated, in his interesting

terra cotta profile conception of Cæsar, would seem to have taken note of this trait of his character, for he makes him the high-born dilettante and exquisite, with the delicate susceptibility of a too secluded lady patrician, or of a vestal virgin, rather than the master spirit of an imperial senate or the virile general of a world-conquering army.

Even in death, you remember, he exhibited this delicate sartorial characteristic, when covering his face with the end of his toga, so as to conceal, even in dissolution, any change of feature that might be unseemly, as a lady with her fan. The ruling passion was strong even in death, and thus having let the curtain fall as it were on his greatness, he died, the garments of his angel of death bespattered with his blood.

In spite of the doubtful *Et tu, Brute,* and its conjectural interpretation, it may be that in the rapidity and confusion of his assassination — for it came like a sudden summons to a higher court — that he thought this, which was his death, but another seizure of epilepsy, for the epileptic die often, hence his covering his face with his flowing robes, as was his custom in an attack so as to conceal compromising contortions. We are aware that the Roman noble when about to die either turned his face to the wall or covered it with the skirt of his toga. Nevertheless we feel that our theory about Cæsar's disposal of his garment was due rather to his conviction that he was about to have another convulsion.

He did not, like King George, of England, exactly

make his own clothes; yet, usually under his personal direction, they were made by his wife, and he gave to them as much attention as if he were planning a campaign, or as if he were a Beau Brummel or a Nash, and needed to increase his fascinations by the fashion of his raiment. Not only the color and the quality of the fabric but the trimmings also received careful attention. It is strange that the omniscient Carlyle did not mention in "Sartor Resartus" *Cæsar's* sartorial elegance and fondness for the things of the man-milliner.

He was thus particular about his appearance until toward the end of his career. As he approached what was to him "the sear and yellow leaf," although he was only fifty-six years old when he died, he was not so careful. At that period in the life of a man when he needs to be more particular about his personal appearance, Cæsar then, like Nero always, became negligent, even to the point of forgetting at times to shave, and did not to such an extent as formerly patronize the bath.

His eyes, we are told, were brown, and not to be out of harmony — like George Washington and Adam and the present royal family of England — his hair was red, we would say auburn. His gait was dignified, expression serious, and in company, rather from good-nature than training, he was scrupulously attentive to all the amenities of polite life. At his best he was a Chesterfield of deportment. Kindly consideration, when it did not conflict with what he thought

duty, was an endearing characteristic. He was severely just and tenderly sympathetic. Yet, as we have seen, he was as regardless of human life when he imagined the occasion demanded it as if it were unworthy of serious thought. He put persons to death, even his friends and the members of his own domestic circle, without scruple or qualm of conscience, just as if requesting them to retire into another room, and with about the same satisfaction, we imagine, felt by a cat when licking her lips after having eaten your pet canary. People then had no regard for human life, not even their own; but, oh, what they accomplished before quitting it,— the matchless unattainable things we have inherited from them,— what they achieved and created! What times those were, after all! Yet, no time seems great when here, and perhaps future inheritors of twentieth century conquests will wax eloquent about us also. What greater thing has ever happened in the world than the multitude of handsome and splendidly equipped libraries erected all over the world by our Carnegies, or the art collections gathered by our Pierpont Morgans?

Nothing in Cæsar's life showed that he was concerned in the slightest about a future state, nor did he seem to have any theory about it.

In collecting from rather voluminous reading into one *ensemble* these domestic and personal traits, which were dwelt upon, too, with so much particularity by the persons who have written so lovingly about Cæsar, notwithstanding the barbarity of some of them and

the trifling nature of others, they impress you with the fact that his all-seeing mind took in the infinitesimally great and little, and that there was nothing in his life especially indicative of epilepsy. They convince you, too, that his disease may be present in man without interfering with the exercise of the highest faculties.

In addition to his wives, whom Plutarch tells us he changed four times, according to the prevalent pagan practice,— a practice that certain misfit clergymen are endeavoring to revise and make respectable, contrary to the teachings of their Master,— there were certain "Bies," as Montaigne calls them, whom, as Charles Lamb said about one of the English kings, "he loved *besides* his wife." Montaigne, in his garrulous way and with characteristic unction, gives a list of these morganatic maids, or matrons, as the case may be, and it includes other queens besides Cleopatra. We learn also from Montaigne that the children of such unions were called "Merlins." The reader will be reminded of the peculiar Merlin in "La Morte d'Arthur," who was no better than Edmund in "King Lear," and that Cæsar was said to be the father of a number of such persons.

He, however, left no legitimate heir. It would be instructive to trace his progeny in the interest of hereditary epilepsy; but it is not possible.

His marriage with Calphurnia was childless. His daughter Julia, whose mother was Cornelia, died forty-four years before the Christian era. Cæsarion, borne to him by Cleopatra, and the child Octavia were never

recognized as legitimate heirs, and died, or were put to death, without issue. So that there were no direct heirs at his death to inherit either his infirmity or his greatness.

In his last will and testament he leaves the grandson of his youngest sister his successor. This is the "Augustus Cæsar" of history, "the young Augustus," whose serious and handsome features have been made familiar by an antique bust, and during whose reign the temple of double-faced Janus, always open while war was being conducted in any of Rome's possessions, was closed for the first time in ages. This was the period preceding the advent of nefarious Nero and marking the coming of Christ.

CHAPTER VI

THE great were highly esteemed in the old days, but often only after their death. It's safer so, for you never can tell what a scoundrel a man may become in his subsequent life, even after the imposition of the laurel. But Cæsar, although assassinated and by the chief men of Rome, was held, nevertheless, in exalted estimate while living; and after his decease he had the royal honor paid him not only of having his profile stamped upon the coin of the realm, but numerous monuments were erected to him in various parts of the Empire. Memorials were also raised in his honor by the government in every state of the Roman union and in every temple in Rome, and it was proclaimed that divine honor should be paid him everywhere. This was the origin perhaps of canonization with one branch of the Christian Church, inasmuch as it made him the object of worship and supplication, as if he were a god. After him, too, and in his honor Roman and other rulers were called Cæsars.

Another trait marking his versatility, but not, so far as I can remember, before mentioned as a distinguishing trait by his admirers, was his capacity as a constructor of temples and palaces and rebuilder of ruined cities: that is to say, his interest in and addiction to the art that includes all art,— architecture. The great

eras and epochs of the world, except the Reformation, were ushered in or were crowned by the construction of mammoth buildings, temples, mausoleums, churches, mosques, pyramids; for they wrote in those remote days their epics, tragedies, and grotesqueries too in stone.

Prehistoric America, Egypt, India, Syria, Greece, Rome, the Saracens, Italy, the period of the Gothic, the Renaissance, thus recorded the steps in the development of their greatness, and wrote their histories in stately buildings, mostly places of worship,— for man is naturally devout,— that are still, even in decay, objects of special wonder. With us the man that builds an enduring home, a château, a school, a library, an academy, or college, is a marked man; his name is embalmed in local memory and likely to be transmitted, like coin in a cornerstone, to unborn generations.

There have been men immortalized by the erection of a single building,—Sir Christopher Wren, St. Paul's; John l'Ahmer, the Alhambra; Pisistratus, the Temple of Jupiter; Herodius Atticus, the Stadium. Illustrations might be repeated endlessly. Some have attained fame by the *decoration* of a building, as Phidias by the sculptures of the Parthenon; others, by the pictorial embellishments of the interior walls, as Tintoretto, by the frescoes of the Venetian Arsenal; some, by the erection of parts of buildings; others, by the mere fractions of parts, as the Prentice Pillar at Hawthorneden. If Michael Angelo had done nothing else, the mere fact of his having reproduced the missing

hand of the Apollo Belvedere would have secured him remembrance.

Men have gained glory by the building of a single church, or part of a church, or the rebuilding of one, as Yorkminster, its reconstruction transmitting to posterity the memory of three men,—Archbishop Rogers, Walter de Gray, and John M. Romaine. La France was immortalized by Canterbury, Bishop Padsey by the Galilee chapel of Durham, and the like; but Cæsar not only raised great temples in their entirety but attended to their pictorial and sculptural decorations as well. Even the mutilated remains of one of these temples would give distinction to a city to-day, for they were wonders in marble, which under the touch of his imperial wand emerged from the heart of the earth like Venus from the sea, and that outran in splendor of ivory, bronze, and semi-precious stone such buildings as the "golden house" of Nero, which they preceded by a hundred years.

Not only this, but he reconstructed whole cities,—their dwellings, palaces, places of worship, coliseums, theaters, pleasure gardens, and driveways,—in more than pristine magnificence. Cities that had been previously reduced by his own or other armies to ruins he re-erected with a splendor unknown to their founders.

The cathedrals of the ages of faith, "poetry in stone," "frozen music," adding their deathless diapason to the slowly evolving harmony of the world, filling the soul with wonder, reverence, and awe, and raising it to heaven, required usually for their construction

centuries of time and the combination of many minds to bring them to their state of devotion-inspiring sublimity. But Cæsar in his own person was responsible for many "temple-miracles," often in marble as white as snow and polished with the perfection of a gem for a lady's finger, for gods and goddesses were never more superbly honored in any land than by the architecture and sculpture of the pagan world.

Judging from the description of his collection of contemporary and ancient art, which he personally gathered and housed in his palace on the Palatine Hill, as intimated by Pliny the Elder, Cæsar was a collector as eager and far-reaching as Cicero or Richard Wallace, and he must have found the creation and recreation of architectural grace and splendor a labor of love beyond that of the mere superintendent.

These in his own lifetime did he who did so many things besides. For he was ruler as well as author, general as well as orator, poet as well as politician; and guided the ship of state to salubrious havens as well as the ark of Roman imperialism to exalted ideals.

So great were the things he inspired and personally commanded and managed that we would appoint a commission and charter a special steamer to bring it to America if we could only possess even one of the decorative figures, or the mere head of one of them — of the statue of Cleopatra, for example, that he had installed in the Temple of Venus Genetrix,— or an entablature, or a fluted column with capitals of gold from some one of his many buildings which are now in

dust, yet which once exhibited a splendor beyond that of Babylon or Heliopolis, and which were created as rapidly in marble, porphyry, ivory, and bronze as we imitate them in wood, plaster, and staff. If such a work of art were to be brought here, it would be photographed and journalized and copied in plaster and putty and celluloid, and given as a premium for a subscription to dollar magazines. It would be talked about in every village and vie with prizefighting reports in the Sunday papers, and enterprising railroads would arrange pilgrimages at reduced rates to gaze upon it.

Thus commerce surrounds the objects of adoration with a nickel halo and humanity pays perpetual homage to greatness.

MOHAMMED

TO

THE MEMORY OF

FRANCES POWER COBBE

Pioneer in the study of comparative religions, this sketch of the Prophet of Arabia is reverently dedicated

MOHAMMED

CHAPTER VII

He had no epileps

From Cæsar, the founder of an empire, to Mohammed, the founder of a religion, there is a gulf of about six hundred years.

The only resemblance that there is between these two is that they were both epileptics and both conquerors. Both wrote one epoch-making book, and both had irritable, nervous systems, which at varying intervals responded by convulsions to unknown stimuli.

Cæsar, as we have seen, only on one occasion attempted to make his malady an excuse for his conduct. But it has been said of Mohammed that he used his infirmity as a ladder up which, as the sun to its zenith, he climbed to the apex of his ambition, or mission, surely the most exalted ever achieved by mere man,—interpreter of the Most High to now nearly one hundred and seventy-seven million persons, who would still rather die than surrender allegiance to their Prophet; and who after thirteen centuries of experimental test still consider impious language uttered against him the same as if uttered against God,—blasphemy punishable by death. It has been said that there is hardly any other religion, Judaism excepted, that has been held so long by so many nationalities and

races of people without producing envy-engendering and perplexing schism.

The author's purpose in the composition of this appreciation is not a panegyric on Mohammed, but rather an attempt to exhibit a mind unspoiled, yet epileptic: in other words, to demonstrate that such a disease may exist side by side with attractive domestic qualities and great public achievements, that a brilliant career, although handicapped thus, is not necessarily precluded by epilepsy.

Just as the Rabbis in their righteous zeal for orthodoxy put the worst construction on all that Christ said and did, so the Christians of the time of Mohammed and subsequently, and not always with the high purpose of the Hebrew, but rather to justify their own rapacity and iniquitous treatment of Islam, put the worst construction on everything connected with the "False Prophet."

Traces of this gratuitously created vilification, in spite of all that has been written to the contrary, are still to be found, if not in books, at least in general conversation. The old slanders are still repeated with irritating complacency, for there are not many things that live so long as does a cunningly devised calumny, when it appeals to cupidity and vanity.

Mohammed was born at the end of the sixth century at Mecca. He was the son of a poor merchant, Abdallah by name, of whom it has been said — and this was considered of sufficient importance by Washington Irving for him to quote it — that he was so beauti-

false statements

ful that " when he married Amina, subsequently Mohammed's mother, two hundred virgins broke their hearts from disappointed love." The father died soon after, some say before, his son's birth, and Mohammed's mother, according to the custom of her people, gave him for a time into the care of a Bedouin nurse, that he might be reared in the salubrious air of the desert. In consequence of repeated convulsions, he was returned in his third year, and from then until his death, fifty-seven years afterward, he was the victim of all the phenomena of epilepsy. The epileptic cry, hallucinations of sight and hearing, automatism, tonic and clonic spasms, and all the prodromi and sequelæ of convulsions would seem to have been distinctly manifest in his various seizures.

It has been said of him that he was guilty of the "pious fraud" of assuring his followers that his spasms were merely periods when his soul separated from his body, was in communion with the Almighty, through the medium of the Archangel Gabriel, and that it was during these indirect seances with the Deity that he received instruction qualifying him to write the Koran. How true this is I do not know. I have found no such claim among Moslem writers.

The monkish story also about his having trained a pigeon to light on his shoulder and pick corn from his ear, with the purpose of giving the impression that it was the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove sent to communicate the mysteries of the unseen, has long ago been discredited as a childish invention of the enemy

and could only have been accepted by persons knowing nothing of the ingenuousness and honesty of his character. Mohammed held the Almighty in too much reverence to have claimed direct communion with Him. Like the Hebrew, he declared that no man could see God and live. Consequently, his interviews were always indirect and, as claimed, through the instrumentality of Gabriel. It is easy to meet such statements with a shrug of the shoulders and cry " fraud " when there may only be at most self-deception.

It is certain, judging from the number of converts and other conditions,— for many of his followers began in illiteracy and semi-barbarity and ended in appreciative scholarship and refinement,— that Mohammed was one of the greatest preachers that ever lived, if not the greatest, judging from almost immediate results. Therefore, it is worth while to study his methods.

St. Paul talked of the foolishness of preaching, and we, some of us, of the compromise of preaching to men on the street; but Mohammed, in addition to buttonhole conferences, nearly always spoke in the open, in the fields, on the hillside, in the road, just as the founder of our religion did, as the primitive Christians did, and among moderns, as Adam Clark, John Wesley, and George Wakefield preëminently did, to thousands of people and convinced them by hundreds of thousands. It is equally true that Mohammed was a great general as well as preacher and poet, a rare, perhaps unique, combination, and that the Koran, his first

and only effort at composition, is a wonderful book, full of poetry, eloquence, from our viewpoint meaningless rhapsody and incomprehensibility, too; but that may be due to our limitations, to our not having the Oriental mind.

"There are passages in it more sublime than anything in Dante or Milton," says Byron, always interested in things Oriental, "and so subtle and profound is much of it that the best minds of the East have found it a text for scholarly and dialectical dissertations for centuries; yet the Koran is said to be the least of Mohammed's achievements;" for not literature but righteousness was his strong point.

However, this remarkable man accomplished the singular feat of establishing, we may call it, a cult that numbers among its members, according to the latest report of a great French census expert, M. Fornier de Flaix, one-sixth of all the people of the earth. Or, to put it in another way, for every five persons in all known religions, including the most numerous, in their order,— Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, Brahminism, Hindooism, Buddhism, Greek Catholicism, Taoism, Judaism, Parsees, Polytheism, and the rest,— for every five persons belonging to all these combined there is one who believes that "God only is God, and Mohammed His Prophet." That is their only Creed. Polygamy is not a part of Mohammedan belief. There are many Mohammedans that do not have even one wife, and they do not need to have. It is also true that Islam is growing more rapidly and makes more

converts every year by missionaries than all other churches combined.

Is not that in itself startling? That such a work of religious construction and unity,— due to the influence of one man speaking but one tongue, and that man an epileptic,— could by any human possibility spring up among a polyglot people is strange and more incomprehensible than any other event in history,— a mysterious occurrence, indeed, beating against the shores of imagination like waves against the rocks from an unknown sea!

Is it not strange, too, that so much of the great work of the world is being, and has been, done by invalids and handicapped persons? In our own time, to mention but a few, there are,— Herbert Spencer, Charles Darwin, Mrs. Browning, the deaf Professor Bell, inventing the telephone, the sightless Huber, studying bees. And is it not stranger still that the athletic and superb specimens of brawn and health often do so little of enduring value?

A sound mind in a sound body does not always imply efficiency in the best things. Aristotle and Æsop, Disraeli and Spinoza, and Schiller and Voltaire, "as ugly as Pope and as sickly as Pascal," and the ever active and always heroic St. Paul are instantly occurring examples. And many other men of feeble mold, who by their achievements have made the world better, had their ancestral Nemesis in the way of chronic invalidism, without apparent limitation of capacity, while the men who take prizes in athletic events are not

always heard of afterward in higher spheres. The leading member, the brains of the family, is often the cripple, the deformed; the stalwart specimen of manly beauty may be its disgrace.

We are so apt in these days of rampant and arrogant athletics to make health and physical development a fetish, and to long after the flesh-pot of a big biceps, not seeming to realize that to most of us overenlarged muscles would be an incongruity, a deformity, as unessential as a tumor or any other abnormal growth. And we are apt to forget too that a manly man, no matter how physically feeble he may be, should not allow the absence of robust health and of muscles like Hercules to stand in the way of a career and active usefulness. Manliness has to do with the mind rather than the muscles.

If it had not been for the salutary invincibility of Charles Martel in the eighth century in breaking the victorious line of Mohammedan march "by breasts," as Gibbon says, "like solid ramparts and arms like iron, the Arab might have been lord of the Teuton and Briton to-day. The Koran might have been taught in the schools of Oxford, and her pulpits demonstrating to a circumcised people the sanctity and truth of the revelation of Mahomet." For the victory of the "Hammer" at Tours over the invading hosts of Islam was one of the decisive battles of the world, and saved Europe to Christianity, to such Christianity as we know to-day, with all its alluring and exhilarating achievements.

For they were a wildly proselytizing body, having such an exalted faith in the founder, or rather fosterer of their religion — for Mohammed only claimed to be " in line with the patriarchs and prophets, including Moses and Jesus "— that they even to-day consider as pagans, idolators, giaours, barbarians, infidels — the epithets are numerous and never complimentary — all who do not believe in him as a servant of God, and that is all he ever pretended to be. He could have been worshiped as a deity had he permitted it; his relics, too, would have worked miracles had he not from the beginning condemned as utterly blasphemous the sanctification of matter, or anything drawing men's minds from God.

In the establishment of the new faith the Prophet's purpose was the obliteration of fetish worship, idolatry, and licentiousness among his countrymen, to all of which they were greatly addicted. Before his time they worshiped clods, stones, hideous idols, and had no responsibility in marriage. Women had no marital rights. They were cast off by former partners without hindrance as you cast off a garment. Pure deism and rigidly limited polygamy —" One, two, or three wives; but better one," was the formula — were substituted as a protest against brutalizing superstition, idol worship, and unrestrained vice. He would seem at first to have favored monogamy; but finally permitted a rigidly restricted polygamy, as a compromise.

These reforms were to have been effected by the pacific influence of moral suasion, preaching, exhorting,

and the reduction of the particulars of the faith to writing for universal dissemination. It was only after extreme persecution by the powerful adherents of the old faith, and after he had multitudes of followers that he resorted to arms. Then, unlike Philip, Alexander, Cæsar, and other conquerors before and since, the rewards of service and victory were not worldly emoluments,— promotion, place, prominence,— but paradise! His officers received no pay, and did not, like Christians of the same period, compensate themselves by pillage.

Righteousness to man and reverence to God like golden threads are woven into the fabric of Islamism. Benevolence and forbearance are the pillars that support the structure. Abstinence and almsgiving are all essential elements, and so is prayer, which is declared "the third part of the faith" and "the gate of entrance into the paradise of the believer." Such were the principal weapons of this epileptic's warfare.

CHAPTER VIII

If you want the earth, you get it — when you are dead. But Mohammed won it while living; for in his own lifetime he saw his creed triumphant, not only in Arabia, but in many outstanding countries.

This is, indeed, unparalleled. That a man, with such odds against him and that man one whose nervous system played tricks with him, should achieve in his own day such vast reforms, not only among his own nation, but among countless races and tribes of linguistically diversified peoples, is a victory greater than any recorded in history. It reverses the opinion, too, that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country.

So convincing a speaker was Mohammed that his preaching had such an effect upon his heterogeneous millions as to mold them into religious unity, and that, too, as we have said, before his death.

Even to-day, no matter how alien your viewpoint, the mere reading of certain excerpts from his compositions thrill you as the priests of Delphos were said to be thrilled by reading or hearing the oracles. But there is no duplicity in Mohammed's discourses: they are often as luminous as light and as candid as the criticism of a child. Yet they have sufficient mystery, too, to make them alluring to the greatest minds. It was

Sir Joshua who said — see his "Lectures on Painting"— that "mystery is an essential element of the sublime." The Koran abounds in this quality.

So implicitly was Mohammed obeyed that his followers not only abstained from all inebriating fluids because he simply said they did more harm than good, but they did not even make use of the proceeds from the sale of intoxicating liquors or even of grapes, because they were used in making such intoxicants. Mohammedan condemnation of games of chance, because of the Prophet's objection to them, is so final that they not only abstain from gambling themselves, but condemn it to such an extent that the testimony of gamblers is invalid in courts of justice. Games of skill, such as chess, are permitted, "unless," as he said, "they interfere with the regular performance of religion or are played for stakes."

Who can tell the secret, plumb the mysterious depths of this unquestioning obedience, elicited, too, from a people so fierce, impassive, belligerent? What faith is like unto this? Faith in a personality,— so impressionable, so loyal, so deathless, so persistent, including the performance of tedious tasks and the denial of many pleasures,— is indeed a problem for psychologists.

His fear of his people's returning to fetish worship, his dread of idolatry, of sanctification of matter, of deification of created things, caused him, like Moses, to prohibit his followers from making the likeness of anything in the heaven above or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth; and they, unlike the

compatriots of the great lawgiver, have never, as a people, disobeyed their "heaven-sent leader." Their loyalty in this particular has resulted in an architecture, an art, and an entirely new system of æsthetics, more beautiful than anything the world had ever seen before; as witness,— the Taj Mahal of Shah Jehan, the specimens of domestic and monumental architecture and decorations scattered through the East, the Alhambra and many other palaces in many parts of Africa and Spain, as in Seville, Cordova, Cadiz, Granada, and also in other parts of the world. Wherever they entered and sojourned as conquerors we find gloriously awe-inspiring memorials. And this superiority in the arts and invincibility in arms continued from the time of Mohammed until the middle of the sixteenth century, when, under the leadership of Solyman, the magnificent, Islam reached the summit of its supremacy. Since then there has been a gradual decline, due, like all declines, to luxury, voluptuousness, depravity, self-indulgence on the part of leaders, and abandonment of the original tenets of the founder and more likely also to an exclusive study of the Koran to the neglect of other books.

Mohammed did not create polygamy. He found it extravagantly practiced among the people of his nation and among all Semitic peoples, including the Jews. When he could not abolish it, he restricted it. Solomon the Wise, as we know, had seven hundred wives in round numbers, besides affinities, without censure; but Mohammed limited the number to "two, three, or

four." "If you fear you cannot properly protect or provide for that many, one"; such is the teaching of the Koran.

You should know, too, that the word "harem," into which we vulgarly read so many base things, philologically means instead "holy place,"— that is to say, the place set apart in the home for women and children.

We are talking, remember, of Mohammedan ideals, of Islamism and its tenets as inculcated by its prophet. The Turk to-day has not become "unspeakable" by obeying, but rather by abandoning the teachings of the Founder of his faith.

Cleanliness and prayer are important parts of the practice of the faithful, who were taught specially to pray five times daily, and to keep their bodies and prayer rugs clean. If water was not to be had for the purpose, they were to bathe with sand, rubbing their bodies with it.

This uniformity of belief and unquestioning obedience, although obtained afterward at the point of the sword, was mostly accomplished peacefully. And it was accomplished, too, without the aid of clergy, for Mohammedanism originally had no special ecclesiastics. Its establishment, too, was secured without the assistance of gorgeous places of worship, with their impressive emotional appeal causing the soul of man to exalt the Creator. There was no clerical establishment, no ritual, no music: merely a bell or the human voice called men to prayer. There were no pictures, no instrumentality of devout women, for Mohammedanism

forbids women to appear in the presence of men at worship — the company of the devout that fill the mosques of Islam are men. There were no emoluments nor salaries connected with the service of the temple. No man was expected to pay for rite or ceremony; everything was to be done without fee, gratuity, or reward. And no one, it seems, expected compensation for religious service in connection with this institution that was founded on a book, a series of revelations, and the shortest of all creeds, "I believe in God and Mohammed as the preacher of God,"— that was a life rather than a church, a religious system whose highest ceremonial is prayer, whose most essential place of worship is anywhere under the blue dome clean enough, when possible, to spread a rug upon, whose all-important duty is the honest discharge of responsibility and debt.

The man that had such an influence over the minds of mixed multitudes through a system of his own invention must, in spite of his neurosis, have been of powerful intellect, and you would imagine of ceaseless industry. Yet, unlike Cæsar, Mohammed was "indolent." He spent the greater part of his time in solitary contemplation. His immediate people, on the whole, were rather insignificant and poor. He himself was the equivalent of a "cowpuncher," sometimes merely a shepherd, again a camel driver for wealthy Meccan cattle dealers. And, unlike Cæsar, too, he began his career late in life.

"What has one to do when turned fifty but really

think of finishing?" says that charming old dilettante, dandy, and pedant, Horace Walpole, in a letter to the author of "An Elegy in a Country Churchyard." Yet it was not so far from this age that Mohammed began — at least when he fully started — on his career of invincibility.

It was after his fortieth year, and when he had been but a few years married, "during an epileptic seizure," that the angel Gabriel appeared and commanded him "in the name of God to preach the truth," as revealed to him, "and to spread it abroad by committing it to writing." During his entire life Mohammed's spasms were of unusual violence and length. "Fearfully rapturous and vehement," says one writer. "As a premonitory symptom," says another, "he roared like a camel," which may have been but the epileptic cry, exaggerated and artificially prolonged by extraneous psychic elements, or by interested or devoted eye-witnesses, just as Chinamen, with the best intentions, artificially prolong their queues by horse hair and bits of string.

Ussiba, which Abulfeda uses in connection with Mohammed, is the Arabic word for an epileptic attack.

In the *Journal Asiatique* Juilett is of the opinion that the prophet's visions were for the most part connected with such spells. Other writers again, in consequence of the fits and other peculiarities, said he was insane, while others declare his hallucinations of the senses, automatic wanderings, and the like, but the eccentricities

of genius, while his enemies asserted that he was in the power of Satan and his agents, the *jinnee*.

Ayesha said that while taken ill "he sometimes sobbed like a hysterical girl," and again "that he cried out like a camel."

The premonitory indications of an attack, although peculiar, were not exclusive, nor by any means unique. For example,— to translate:

"One day while wandering about the hills near Mecca with suicidal intent, he heard a voice and looking up beheld Gabriel floating in space, who assured him that he, Mohammed, was the servant of God.

"Frightened by this apparition, he went home, and feeling unwell, he had a fit.

"They poured water upon him,"— an abominable thing to do, yet it is done still the world over,—"and when recovering, he received a revelation, as follows: 'Oh, thou covered [or concealed] one, arise, preach, magnify the Lord, cleanse thy garments, and fly every abomination."

"Some authors," says Weil, "Consider the fits of the Prophet as the principal evidence of his mission." They were not always the same, either in duration or quality.

"Sometimes they were ushered in by a coldness of the extremities and shivering. They were preceded often by depression of spirits and apprehension, and were accompanied in the premonitory stage by tinkling in the ears; airy bells were ringing, or bees were swarming, around his head; his lips quivered, but this mo-

tion was under the control of volition. Then his eyes became fixed and staring, and the motion of his head convulsive and automatic. At length, after a few minutes, perspiration broke out, the muscles relaxed, and this ended the attack.

" Sometimes, though, if the spell was violent, he fell comatose to the ground, went into convulsions, his face was flushed, respiration stertorous, and he remained thus for some time."

Bystanders, with perhaps the best intention sprinkled water in his face, as is done to-day, and when he recovered consciousness, they concluded that it was due to the water.

" Mohammed himself fancied he might derive benefit by being cupped on the head."

CHAPTER IX

"We do not need," says Emerson, "to subscribe to Omar the Great's fanatical compliment to the Koran when he said, 'Burn the libraries, for their value is in this book. Its sentences contain the culture of nations, the cornerstone of schools, the fountainhead of literature, a discipline in logic, poetry, rhetoric, practical wisdom, taste.'" Yet, according to the opinion of certain experts in Islamism, the Koran was Mohammed's weakest performance, although it contains things that have kept commentators busy for centuries, and it is certainly the bond that unites Islam.

It has been charged against Mohammed that he was, or rather became, sensual, and therefore that he was not sincere in religion. But on this ground we could also exclude other great religious teachers,— Abraham, Solomon, David, "the man," with all his faults, "after God's own heart," or Charlemagne, for example, "that most Christian king of the Franks." Yet no unbiased historian thinks of doing this now for we cannot justly apply the standards of the present day, when men and women are ostracised from good society merely because of being divorced and married again, to other times, with their different ideals and coarser practices.

Take the Christian world, for example, before and for some time after that spiritual awakening, that re-

turn to primitive Christian standards known as the Reformation, when licentiousness was the rule, and virtue it was believed could hardly exist outside of a monastery, and such a thing as the protection of the divorce was almost unknown. The word " bastard " was in common use and " natural children," that is to say, children born out of wedlock, were a matter of course. What king or ruler or nobleman was then thought the less of because he was a libertine and robber? Now so great is the improvement that even such phrases are eliminated from the vocabulary of respectable persons. And if a public man should be known to be guilty of such practices to-day as were common then the chances are, especially among Anglo-Saxon people, that it would cut short his career.

Persecuted by the adherents of the old fetish worship, Mohammed was finally compelled to go to war for the protection of " pure religion " and the obliteration of idolatry, until finally the victory of the new faith was secured for all Arabia. Scarcely a century after his death Islam reigned supreme also over Syria, Persia, important parts of Egypt, and the whole of the north coast of Africa. It went even into Spain and still onward, until ultimately the Crescent was made to gleam from the spire of St. Sophia, and the war cry *" Allali il Allali "* was heard from the gates of Vienna.

If Mohammed was an impostor,— as it was the custom until about a half century ago to proclaim him,— it was not because of any comfort it brought him, nor, as in the case of Cæsar, because of ambition. For al-

though, unlike the benign son of Joseph, the founder of our divine religion, and according to the flesh altogether sane and humane, Mohammed was at times cunning, revengeful, sensual,— but not as much so even at the end of his career as were most persons of his period,— yet, during the zenith of his fame, after countless persons had laid down their arms and declared him supreme, when he was recognized as a prophet, prince, and spiritual ruler of conquering millions ready to give up their all for him, he himself, scorning material luxury and personal ease, lived in a small hut, mended his own clothes, made and cobbled his own shoes, freed all his slaves, attended to his domestic duties unaided, and gave much of his time to solitary meditation and prayer. Yet,— with all their pomp and pride and retinues of attendants, poisoners, and gentlemen of the bedchamber, and cup-bearers, and bodyguards, and maids of honor, and assassins; with all their banners and royal palaces; with all the pride of life and pomp and circumstances of war; with all their coronets and crowns and tiaras,— no man was ever so revered and obeyed as was this man, wearing shoes of his own cobbling and cloaks of his own clouting, living intimately and familiarly in the open before his people, going out and in among them for a period of twenty years without losing their high esteem and reverence.

Until arriving at years of discretion and better knowledge most men condemn all religions but the one in which they were reared. Some unfortunates never

outgrow this undeveloped state. Nevertheless such European specialists in Islamism, men not to be mentioned without the respect due to genius, as Prideaux, DuReger, Jenner, Buchardi, Burton, Weil, Geiger, and others, unitedly assert that Mohammedanism, which began in illiteracy and superstition and had its first emphatic awakening in the mind of an epileptic, may be said to be " the enlightened teacher of barbarous Europe from the Ninth to the Thirteenth Century."

" It is from the glorious days of the Abbasides," says Eberhard, " that the real Renaissance of Greek culture is to be dated," a statement that has since gained universal recognition. " Classical literature would have been irredeemably lost," said another writer, " if it had not been for the home it found in the schools of the unbelievers during the dark ages."

" Arabic philosophy, medicine, natural history, geography, grammar, rhetoric, and the golden art of poetry, schooled by the old Hellenic masters, produced an abundant harvest of works among Mohammedans, many of which will live, and teach of duty as long as there will be generations to learn."

CHAPTER X

You can generally tell a good deal about a man by what he believes, especially by what he believes about the state of the dead. That is the reason why most persons when asked won't tell you — it betrays them. The abode that man creates as a place of post-mortem punishment " for sin and uncleanness and every transgression," as well as the place of reward for righteousness, reveals his views on many other things besides.

Mohammed, like the founders of other religions, was not at all squeamish in this particular. He had no hesitancy about being misunderstood. Indeed, he took very particular pains to emphasize the fact that sin should not go unpunished any more than virtue should go unrewarded, either in this world or in the world to come. And he was so minutely realistic in his descriptions of celestial rewards and Gehenna punishments that he left no room for doubt. In ingenuity of invention and lucidity of description, amounting at times to poetry, of the penalties inflicted upon the doomed inhabitants of the abode of the lost, in the dragonading of heretics by the inquisitors of Hades, he excels all his predecessors. Even Dante and Milton, his imitators, are but sorry bunglers as compared with him.

The Tormentori of a modern monster, Mantagazzi,

is but child's play, only showing an utter lack of imagination as contrasted with the protracted agonies discovered by Mohammed in some out-of-the-way recess of his myriad mind for the cure and prevention of all sorts of sin, of which the greatest to him was the denying of the unity of God. Consequently the doctrine of the Trinity is the vilest of blasphemies to Mohammedans. His word pictures of the many varieties of punishments imposed upon the obstinately incorrigible as illustrations of "retributive justice,"— always produced by the use of the extremes of heat and cold, like a tarantella played upon two strings, and meted out to those who having heard do not believe the Islam verities,— are marvels, you might say, of malevolent invention, fitted with much particularity to special crimes. He had a nice discrimination in this direction, a connoisseurship, we might call it, in the arrangement of torments, amounting to art. If he had lived in Spain contemporary with the Inquisition he would have made Torquemada turn pale with envy. Mohammed's punishments, however, unlike that arch-inquisitor's, were meted out to people *departed,* that is to say, beyond his reach,— like a man threatening with vengeance a belligerent wife, but only when she is inaccessible and outside of the sound of his voice,— thus exhibiting a singular inconsistency in his make-up, for he was kind and generous by nature and practice, a tender father and loyal friend, a lover of mankind, indulgent to human frailty and even admitting the lower animals within the magic circle of his affections. What a mys-

tery is man! — and what a contradiction! — and what an enigma! And what tricks the devil is apt to play with him! Satan as a hoodwinker of the self-righteous — although Mohammed always disclaimed that he was better than other men — has all the adroitness and cunning of a past master.

Was it not St. Dominic of whom we are told that "he had such a burning zeal for the things of God" that he regretted the number of Albigenses that through weakness he allowed to escape slow fire and the rack? Yet maybe he was a heretic himself — who can definitely and infallibly decide? To the contrary, so far reaching was the philanthropy of Mohammed that he protected the weak and cared for the aged, with constant alms giving,— not alms receiving,— an essential part of the faith and practice of Islam. With the naïveté of the unsophisticated and unspoiled, with the felicity of a master of style, with the unpremeditated charm of an artist of words, he says: "To give in public, to be seen of men, is better than not to give at all. . . . To give in secret as to God is best. . . . If you have nothing to give, to smile in your brother's face is an alms. . . . It is an alms to sympathize with distress and to encourage the weak."

In spite of vilifications, he would seem to have walked through the solemnities of life toward his goal as calmly as Dürer's "Knight of Death" rides through its horrors, and with identical singleness of purpose; with no deviation, no sidelong glances of timidity or fear, though in the presence of the enemy;

accompanied rather with the resolve that always ends in victory, because connected with heaven-imposed duties, as if *Ich Dien* were his motto. He did not need to go out of his way to be heroic. He was ever the most domestic of men and amiable of friends, the playmate of his children, to whom he was as devoted as a nursing mother, taking an interest even in their dolls, as if he were a paid attendant. Nothing of a veiled prophet was he, living as he did in close and humble intimacy for years with his followers, without diminution of their high esteem and reverence. He would have been a hero, even to his valet, if he had had one.

Whether he was a camel driver, or a shepherd, or a preacher, or a soldier, or a conqueror, or a legislator, he was always a poet, sometimes a philosopher, and he was ever thus overflowing with kindness, with little acts of personal attention and self-sacrifice, and with all the gentle lambencies of home life "that adorned it," as was said in the figurative Oriental way, "like jewels around the neck."

CHAPTER XI

It was not until after the death of Cadijah, his first wife, that he availed himself of the custom of his country and took a plurality of wives. This the weakness of his career, inconsistent with his own teachings and laws, was claimed as the prerogative of the prophet, which was not to be repeated by his followers, but which nevertheless laid him open to the charge of being an impostor. This was the most compromising occurrence in his history. It was the cause of most adverse criticism and perhaps of the subsequent deterioration of his followers.

Some of these marriages, it was said, were but for reasons of state; as, for example, his marriages with Ayesha, the daughter of Abu Beker: Sweda, the daughter of Zama, and Haphsa, the daughter of Omar,— the St. Paul we might call him of Islam,— thereby making himself the son-in-law of three of the most powerful of his contemporaries. These polygamous unions were much emphasized by his enemies and exposed him to charges of insincerity. Yet they may have been pathologic rather than immoral, no more implying vice than it would imply such a condition for certain chlorotic patients to eat lime from a plastered wall, or clay from a garden, or for others to be unable to avoid varicose veins or dropsy, each equally due to disease,

being the result of hypertrophy and tissue degeneration, over which the patient has but little control.

Mohammed, after the death of his wife, with whom he lived inviolably for over twenty years,was prematurely an old man. Then he began to exhibit the vagary, the grotesque mania, for marrying widows, which he did to the number of nine. It is during these periods of physical and mental disintegration that old men often at the end of blameless lives become the victims of moral aberrations, thus stultifying and abrogating their continent past. Tragedies these, in spite of Balzac-laughter, which, while they make the thoughtless and inconsiderate merry, make the judicious grieve, and bring wretchedness to families. This is suggested as a solution of the shame-producing sensuality which sometimes appears at the conclusion of otherwise blameless and chaste lives,— not only Mohammed's but other men's as well,— and which needs private medical attention and control rather than public exposure and censure.

If a man having lived an exemplary life, and nearing the end of it, breaks out into acts of immorality, there is usually pathology at the bottom of it, demanding more the aid of the physician than of the divine. It is often morbid anatomy rather than Circe that causes men, sometimes old men too, "to lose their upright shape, and become like groveling swine." We have known several such instances.

But to return. There is no stupid uniformity in the infliction of agony in the Hell of Mohammed,

where all varieties of sinner, as with us, from the conscientious doubter, often as much afraid of sin and as much given to good works as a saint, to the blasphemer, thief, drunkard, parricide, and perjurer are promiscuously dumped into the same Gehenna and singed with the same flames and roasted as St. Lawrence was on the same gridiron. The Moslem place of the condemned, if you please, is divided into seven sections, not nine circles or flats, as in Dante, but something like a Chicago apartment house, or rather apartment store, where you always get what you don't want and there is no redress. And as the delights of Paradise are suited to the gratification of each of the five senses, so the torments of the inhabitants of the kingdom presided over by fallen angels consist, as has been said, of extremes of heat and cold, which are nicely adapted to the many classes of transgressors.

Dante, numerically more generous without showing any necessity for it, divides his rendezvous of the wicked into nine circles. But his methods of producing anguish, horrible as they are, are coarse and commonplace compared with those of Mohammed. In the matter of invention, what, for example, could be more ingenious or more graphically described as a possible prophylactic against sin than the infliction said to be the lightest in the whole cycle of *autos da fé* in the Hades of Islam, which consists in the victim's being "shod with sandals of fire so hellish hot that they make his brain boil in his skull like broth in a cauldron!"

This, though, according to its inventor, mercifully is to be endured only for a period of from seven hundred to nine thousand years — the prophet is very particular about the length of the period and the nature of the dominant sin to be thus cancelled, after which the sinner may be released. For crimes committed by the faithful, also by Jews and Christians, are always expiated by limited post-mortem suffering. Only incorrigible infidels are tormented forever.

Or what could be more blood-curdling and nerve-shattering than the bridge from earth to heaven, "as thin as a hair and as sharp as a razor," stretched across the yawning crater of the abyss filled with tormented multitudes, over which the faithful have to pass on their way to paradise? The merest misstep, and headlong they go into the pit that alternately burns and freezes forever. They are pitched as if mere "eye of newt or tongue of dog" into the cauldron of Hecate, everlasting and alternately freezing and boiling. Yet how full of symbolism, say the believers, how well adapted it was, and perhaps still is thought to be by multitudes, to deter the arrogantly superstitious and indolently credulous from apostasy. It shows, too, that not many men were as capable of transmuting leaden words into the Empyrean of pure thought, and untrammeled imagination, and downright horror as this inspired camel driver.

Thus the poet in him, the Creator, with the best intentions, getting his cue perhaps from the gross Christianity of the times, gives "to airy nothingness a local

habitation and a name," adapting his teachings, as he thought, to the reformation of the corrupt nature of man, especially of the man of the Orient, and to the eradication of the vices and the frailties to which it is said he is universally addicted. For licentiousness, drunkenness, gambling, and all that invariably follow in their wake the world over — like the phosphorescent trail following a ship in the night — existed to so great an extent among his countrymen and most Semitic races previous to his time, " alienating them," as he said, " from God." The purpose of his mission was to restore them to their lost estate, and to enable degenerate man to turn from sin and cultivate righteousness.

Fasting is a duty of so much moment, according to the teachings of the Prophet, that he called it " the gate of religion." In his fine figurative way, he said, " The odor of the mouth of him who fasteth is more grateful to God than that of musk." Musk is the odor *par excellence* of Islamism. The ravishing but modest and impeccable creatures " feeding on fragrance " with which, for the felicity of the faithful, he peopled paradise are made of pure musk, and odoriferous exhalations of the same perfume regale the nostrils of the faithful throughout eternity. Mohammed's fondness for pleasant odors and for the taste of milk, which with honey and figs constituted nearly all his diet, were pronounced characteristics.

Take, too, his great achievements,— the abolition of the law of primogeniture, which had rooted itself into the life of Arabia for ages; the shattering of adaman-

tine caste, out of which before his time release was impossible; his ignoring of social and racial distinctions, to the extent of declaring all believers equal — blacks, whites, buffs, and saffrons are all alike to Islam, and even the slave the moment he becomes a Moslem is the same as a free man. There was no rousing of religious zeal among his followers by insidious social distinctions or promises of promotion. It was a proclamation of the opposite that won to his standard so many of the countless millions of India. Cæsar allured his soldiers by the offer of spoils; Mohammed, by promises of paradise, although spoils finally became an incentive to loyalty.

His dangerous doctrine, too, of the insignificance of the relationship of blood and kindred as compared with the relationship of creed at first glance might be thought likely to stultify his standing, at least with his family.

Faith, he taught, was a stronger bond than race or consanguinity, though not because he disregarded the sacredness of clan and kinship.

His claim after years of meditation of being the successor of Christ, the promised holy spirit or paraclete sent, not to destroy, but to complete Christ's mission, was first successfully preached to *his own immediate family,* then to his other relatives. This fact shows and all his teachings evidence that like St. Paul he believed that he who provides not for his own, especially those of his own household, hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel. It was not, then, that

he regarded the bonds of family less, but that he regarded the bonds of similarity and identity of belief more.

Thus at least three great reformations were effected by him without belligerent contention, any one of which by any other man, judging from what we know of the past, would have cost rivers of tears and thousands of lives. But with him, because of recognition of his exalted ideals, they were accomplished without the shedding of blood. Thus this epileptic and reformer of personality and promoter of polished manners, this restorer, as he claims, of the pure religion revealed by God to Noah, Abraham, Moses, and, greatest of all, Jesus, accomplished achievements so great that, like Dryden's Sejinus, he might be thought to be "not one, but all mankind's epitome."

I go thus into the various ramifications of the mind of the founder of "the true faith," as indicated by what he accomplished and thought, in order to estimate his character without prejudice, to exhibit its timber and quality, the profundity of its emotions; to conjure again into visibility the abstractions converted into realities that must have haunted his meditations, and that accompanied his visions; to show how unimpaired his reason was in every faculty, how varied, yet how generally free from the incongruous and bizarre. This idea of being free from the bizarre will not apply certainly to his ideas of the pleasures of paradise; yet even they are capable of a better interpretation than appears on the surface, since we can only express the

unseen and unrealized felicity by the seen and experienced.

This certainly ought to give encouragement to educated epileptics, who, just because of the very consequent keenness of their susceptibilities, are ever apprehensive of mental breakdown. We are being consulted daily by chronic sufferers, *past middle life, with all their faculties in full vigor,* and, but for the atmosphere of dread engendered by pessimism, capable of fine work, yet hesitating about engaging in the very thing,— suitable employment,— which is an important factor in bringing about cure.

Except the domestic relation, which, judging by our better standards, is to us not only the dead but putrid fly in his pot of ointment, the ethics of Mohammed are of the highest order and everything " the Saxon people have included under the term Christian gentleman " is insisted upon by Islam.

In faith and practice, in everything but polygamy, and his polygamy was copied after that of the Patriarchs and Prophets, Mohammed was a Christian,— that is to say, he believed in the divinity, not the deity, of Christ, that He was the Sent of God. He believed also in the inspiration of Scripture, that God is *Auctor utriusque Testamenti,* and with St. Paul, *Omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata.* He believed, too, what Christ taught about a future of rewards and punishment. He also accepted the miracles, but in common with Protestant Christians he believed they ended with Christ and His immediate disciples.

There is no moral precept in the Bible, it has been said, that is not found to be inculcated by Islamism, embellished often by the fine poetic genius of Arabia, except that instead of perplexing creed formulated by subsequent theology they have simply the "I believe in God and the doctrines respecting Him taught by the preacher Mohammed." This is the whole creed.

Instead of clergymen every Mussulman was his own priest; instead of monasteries they had schools.

Now, however, there are mosques, where as many as thirty relays of priests take the reading of the Koran in succession and get through the whole book each day.

For twelve hundred years the voice of the book, in the same tongue, has kept sounding thus through the ears and hearts of millions of men. There are Mohammedan doctors who have read the Koran seventy thousand times! "What a reflection on the national taste!" says Thomas Carlyle.

We say, "The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church." One of the traditional sayings of Mohammed that is recorded in the Sunna and that the Moslem boy to-day writes in his copy-book is, "The ink of scholars is as good as the blood of martyrs."

In regard to Mohammedan scholarship it has been shown that "when the European world was clouded in barbarity and ignorance, when sovereign princes could neither read nor write, the Arabians rivaled the Romans of the Augustan age in erudition and genius, while, with a more extensive empire, they excelled

them in magnificence and in the more refined splendor and elegance of life." Men eminent in every branch of learning have emerged from the ranks of Islam.

"The Caliphs Al Moahi, Al Rashia, Al Mahmoan, and other monarchs of the illustrious house of Al Abbas were men of learning. Genius and politeness, scholarship and literature, were found then the surest avenue to royal favor. They were a universally cultivated people; princes, generals, vizirs, being not only magnificent patrons of art and letters, but held themselves conspicuous places among writers of the most distinguished class."

This you might expect, since the first converts of Mohammed after his own wife and household were men of high social position.

When the monks for nearly a thousand years gathered manuscripts into the monasteries for the purpose of erasing from them the words of classic writers and modestly substituting their own, Mohammedans were establishing schools for the study of the Ancients and for their introduction among the people.

As an illustration not only of the tolerance, but of the preëminence of Islam,— only about two hundred years, too, after the death of Mohammed,— Haroon Al Raschid, Lord of Asia from Africa to India, in appreciation of the altruistic greatness of Charlemagne and his interest in education, sent ambassadors to him from his magnificent capital of Bagdad, with presents of silken tents, an elephant, a water clock, and what United Europe was unable to take and keep, the keys

of the holy sepulchre, which he generously presented as a gift.

Sir William Jones in his book, "The Literature of Asia," asserts that the Mohammedans are commanded by their lawgiver to search for learning, even to the remotest parts of the earth. And Mr. Morris, in the "History of Hindustan," says that the zeal for the encouragement of learning which animated the Arabian princes continued to glow with almost equal fervor in the breast of the Tartar monarchs, their conquerors and successors.

CHAPTER XII

SHOWING how interpenetrated the Prophet's mind was with the often latent instinct of bodily purity as a symbol of the purity of God, he taught that personal cleanliness was essential to Islamism, and so anxious was he that his followers should be punctual in this preëminently religious duty — the Turkish bath is a Mohammedan evolution — that he declared the practice of genuine religion to be founded on cleanliness, which is "one-half of the faith," he said, "and the key of prayer, without which God will not hear prayer."

The idea of persons approaching the Lord in worship without purifying ablutions is so abhorrent to the Moslem, that, in order to facilitate cleanliness, in every mosque are great tanks perforated with many apertures, through which are constantly escaping streams of pure water. These are for the washing of the faithful, thus anticipating, at least as far as personal cleanliness is concerned, by some twelve centuries John Wesley's dictum declaring "cleanliness to be next to godliness." See Dollinger's "Mohammed's *Religion* nach ihrer innern Entwickelung und ihren Einflusse auf das Leben Volker"; also Sale's introduction to his translation of the Koran.

That the above Mohammedan expressions about purification might be understood in their spiritual sense

also, the sense in which the Prophet meant them, Al Ghazali, a celebrated commentator of the Koran and Sunna, records four degrees of purification. First, the cleansing of the body from material defilement; second, the cleansing of the members of the body from wickedness, including the eyes from seeing evil, the hands and other members from doing evil, the ears from hearing evil, and the tongue from uttering it, which will remind the reader of a familiar Japanese picture; third, the purification of the heart from vicious inclinations; fourth, the cleansing of man's thoughts from affections that interfere with devotion to God.

Indeed, too, we might almost believe that when personal cleanliness is alluded to by the Koran, personal pulchritude, comeliness, is included or implied, for the author had the poet's eye for beauty,— *belle tournure,* — in everything to a marked degree. The beautiful personality was always expressed by the beautifully pellucid body, as if " made of pure musk." For musk, as has been said, and other exhilarating and soothing odors, the manufacture of which was reduced to a science by the Saracens, are omnipresent factors in the enrichment of Moslem ante-mortem life as well as in the state of the departed in Paradise. A condition this which would imply high-strung sensibility on the part of its founder. Evidently he had keen nerves as well as a special delight in pleasant odors.

He was so fond of sweet smells and so susceptible to the opposite that he did not care to have a man visit him who had eaten garlic, or who was not per-

fectly clean. All bad odors were so offensive to him, his olfactories were so keen to all scents, that there is a possibility that his seizures were sometimes due to fetid exhalations.

We have seen two attacks of convulsions caused by malodorous vapors, and the text-books have recorded a few similar illustrations. Hallucinations of smell, and indeed a hyperæsthetic condition of all the senses, is a rather common concomitant of epilepsy.

Such phrases as " redolent of sweet smells," " spice-scented breezes," " thuriferous zephyrs from the place of the departed," " muscadine of odorous perfumes," " balm-saturated," " fragrant as the rose in the garden of Allah," " bergamot bliss from the fields of Samarcand," " perfume-laden like the breath of houri," — if we may be permitted to glean in the overabundant fields of Boaz,— are familiar and frequent allusions to odors in the literature of Islam, showing an unusual development of the sense of smell.

In the Occident pleasant odors were used to conceal fetid odors. With the Mussulman they were used to enrich life, and Mohammed seems to have been the first of the Arabians to take special delight in the particular gratification of this special sense.

The perfumery of Arabia since the days of the Prophet has found a ready market in all climes. Shakespeare knew this. You may remember that long before his time he makes the remorse-haunted Lady Macbeth, in the remote castle of Dunsinane in far-away Scotland, exclaim in her somnambulistic agony,

"All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh! oh! oh!" As if then nothing would.

It may be noted, too, in consequence of the subsequent devotion of the co-religionists of Mohammed to all the sciences, that it was Arabian physicians and physiologists that transferred the seat of the emotions, of thought, and of perception from the heart and liver to the brain. The most skillful anatomists and chemists and the most prolific discoverers in connection with the sciences were Saracens. Many of the old-time chemical phrases were of Arabic origin: as,— alcohol, alembic, and the like, which proclaim this devotion to difficult study. It is strange, too, that this victim of epilepsy from his first years until his death, this camel driver and companion chiefly of drovers until his twenty-fifth year, of whom nothing worthy of record appeared in his life until his fortieth year — a period when many of the great of the earth have made their mark — should have had such a profound sense of the just, the beautiful, and the appropriate.

So profound indeed was this sense that a system of æsthetics has been occasioned by his preferences and restrictions, and, as we have seen, has resulted in the most elaborate and altogether delightful architecture, the most intricate system of decoration, and the most beautiful and harmonious arrangement of color that the world has ever seen, picturesque in every particular, from mosque to personal adornment, from civic garments to military accouterments, from furnishings

of the horse to furnishings of the house. They have the most beautiful carpets and draperies — only in the application of machinery to the arts are they deficient.

And then their buildings! — who, traveling in Spain or in the Orient, has failed to notice them? What magnificence! Apparitions of cloud-capped domes, like the enchantments of a more subtle Prospero; sky-piercing minarets; alluring vistas; secluded arcades; shaded retreats; luminous resorts; rainbow fountains of rippling water; gardens of delight; towers fashioned like gems and finished like the setting of jewelry; enamel-embroidered surfaces of interlacing, parti-colored lines, blending into one another like chords of music in a symphony; emblazoned traceries, ever glowing, "untwisting all the chords that tie the hidden soul of harmony"; forests of columns, inviting contemplation and repose, slender, lissom, like spectral columns occurring to the mind in sleep. Not only are the magnificent shrines of Islam in Egypt and India splendid illustrations of characteristic Saracenic architecture, but wherever they carried their conquering arms this new style of art is seen to arise. Not only in the mosque and private houses of Cairo but also in those of Damascus, Kairowan, Cardova, Seville, Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, North Africa, Spain, Sicily, and the Baleric Islands can be traced the influence of the art and the ornamentation variously known as Arabic, Mohammedan, Moorish, and Saracenic, having its origin and elaboration in the teachings of Mohammed's book, the Koran.

"Bagdad shrines of fretted gold,
High-walled gardens, green and old,"

as seen only in a dream; gorgeous pageantry of the illimitable inane, like cloud battlemented tropical heavens at sunset, composed of sea-foam and sky, and blending every color and tint; arabesques of endless complications and infinite symmetry, revealing like the parts of a composition by Titian the very soul of chromatic harmony,— light enough to float in space like a cloud, yet durable as the hills.

"In Xanadu did Kublakhan
A stately pleasure-dome decree,
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea;
So twice twelve miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round."

This, the language of poetry and fable, could hardly be applied to any other art but the landscape art and architecture, flowing from the fertile garden of the Koran and "Traditions of the Prophet." Nor could the following prose, from "Purchase's Pilgrimage," which was quoted by Coleridge and which suggested the above: "Here the Khan [Arabic for king], Eubla, commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden therewith, and thus ten miles of fertile ground were enclosed with a wall."

After reading this, the poet fell asleep and composed the poem from which the above quotation is taken.

CHAPTER XIII

ISLAM, meaning submission to God, as instituted by its founder, Mohammed, was essentially a spiritual and personal religion. If he had seen or known a good example of Christianity, we have felt that he might likely have been altogether a Christian. But the Christianity of his day and country was so mongrel that it repulsed rather than attracted serious men.

Islamism had no priest in the western sense, and no sacrifice. No person was allowed to come between the human soul and God. It was so purely deistic and so much opposed to idolatry that it forbade the representation of living things either as objects of use or of admiration, decoration, veneration, or worship. Mohammed disliked images more intensely than did the iconoclasts of Constantinople, or the soldiers of William the Silent, or the Roundheads of Cromwell. But let not the reader imagine, as is the common custom, that these men opposed religious pictures and plastic representations of the deity because they were opposed to beauty or art. It was not that they thought less of art, but more of God, that, like the ancient Hebrews, they objected to material representation of Him fashioned from wood, stone, paint, or clay by the hand of man.

Every mosque and home also, as indicated above,

bear witness to this; statuary and pictures being forbidden, even as decorations. Variegated marble, festoons of lamps, geometric shapes, and tortuous inscriptions from the sacred writings take their place, and form that peculiar species of ornamentation, confined to the inanimate world, which we call arabesque. Yet, even Gothic architecture owes much to Moorish, in particular the horseshoe or crescent arch. And the pointed arch itself is to be found in many early mosques previous to the Gothic. St. Mark's in Venice owes its peculiar charm to Moslem influence, for the Venetians at one time were closely connected with the Moors. Shakespeare, our favorite historian, knew this. "Othello, the Moor of Venice," taken from an Italian story, and many other native Italian productions show signs of Saracenic suggestion.

As we have seen, Mohammed had frequent hallucinations both of sight and hearing, and perhaps of smell, a rather common epileptic condition. In desperation and sorrow of soul — for like most great men he was subject to periods of profound sadness — when he had ascended Mount Hira on a certain occasion, with the intention of committing suicide, he beheld, he tells us, "the archangel Gabriel standing on the verge of the horizon and heard his voice saying, 'I am Gabriel, and thou art the Prophet of God.'" He stood entranced, incapable of motion, until his always devoted wife sent out servants to find him and bring him home.

His visions and revelations in connection with seizures, or during an attack of automatism, were al-

ways thus exalted. His descriptions of them are as stately as if uttered by Elijah, as florid as if written by Chaucer or Spenser, for he had the poet's gift of luminous and picturesque expression, always abounding in tropes and metaphors.

Except Shakespeare and John Bunyan no one had clearer views of what he saw. He beheld what he described, and expressed it in language lambent, with embellishments that charm, with sincerity that convinces.

He not only possessed the poet's gift of expression, but also the intense affection of the poet. He had the disinterestedness of poetic nature, ever ready to deny self and to give to others, or, like Socrates or Diogenes or any Stoic, ever aiming to reduce his possessions to the merest essentials.

The defect of Mohammedanism is polygamy, and this was copied from the Old Testament, and likely in time will correct itself, as it has done among the Jews, for polygamy is impracticable. Yet the morality of the humblest soldier in the Prophet's army, it has been said, was as high above the morality of many of even the Greek and Roman *leaders* as the stars of heaven are exalted above the starfish of the sea. That is, there is no comparison, and people familiar with Greek and Latin life know that there is none. Yet there are those who assert that the world is no better to-day than it was before the proclamation of the Ten Commandments or the Sermon on the Mount.

Christian chastity was proclaimed from heaven to

such an unheard-of refinement that the Divine Teacher said that " he who even looketh at a woman unbecomingly is guilty of unchastity in his heart."

Much has been said about Mohammedanism in this particular. It has been accused of authorizing all the vices of the west, rather than restricting them. But what are we to say about the same vices in Christendom before the fifteenth century. Read any authentic history of the Crusaders or Knights Templar, or of the periods in the life of the church that called into existence such reformers as Bernard of Clairvaux, and realize that inconsistent conduct on the part of professed adherents enter into the history of every religion.

Judging from Christian ideals of marriage, Islamism is a failure. Nevertheless, we think it will be found true that Mohammedans until the thirteenth century, during and after the rule of the Caliphs, were at least as chaste as their Christian contemporaries. The Crusaders who invaded the East, especially after the first crusade, chiefly as robbers and murderers, under the plea of rescuing the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the Saracens, were by no means Josephs in this particular. And their pitiless cruelty and vindictiveness besides — they were under oath, many of them, to show no quarter to infidels — make their conduct something rather to be reprobated than approved.

Some of the crusading orders,— especially the Knights of the Temple, organized to protect pilgrims on their way to and from Jerusalem,— were so utterly

vile that both Church and State united in putting scores of them to death by torture and slow fire. Finally, because of blasphemy and licentiousness, the order was abolished and their property was confiscated.

If you do not care to read histories, it is only necessary to look over such a book as Malory's "La Morte d'Arthur," the original of Tennyson's "Idyls of the King,"— and by the way, Tennyson's "Idyls" represent modern and Malory's "Morte d'Arthur" medieval morals — to know how lax the manners of those days were as compared with to-day, and in order to learn that the followers of Mohammed were not the only promiscuous violators of the seventh commandment. They never violated the commandment at all, except in violation of the teaching of the Koran.

The Mohammedan law was strict. It declared such offenses in either sex punishable by a hundred stripes. In case of a woman's being found incorrigible, after the third offense she was to be sewed in a sack, sometimes with a serpent, a monkey, and a dog, and cast into the sea. This would show how they regarded unchastity.

Power put Mohammed to the test. It brought new temptations. Nevertheless, few men, if any, who lived "in that fierce light which beats upon a throne and blackens every blot," according to the opinion of good authorities, stood the test as well as he.

As for moderation in victory, and sympathy for the vanquished, see the account of his entry into Mecca as an invincible conqueror as compared with the entries

of Sulla or Marius into Rome, or the conquests of any of the great cities by Philip or Alexander, or the "Christian" victories of the Middle Ages against the Saracens, or how Christians treated the Jews, with all their attendant circumstances and outrages, and think of the use made by other conquerors of their conquests. You will then be in a position to appreciate the magnanimity of the Prophet of Arabia as compared with the Christian crusaders, whose war-cry against Jew and Saracen was "Persecute to the death."

We have no reason to be proud of many of our Christian forebears.

To quote from H. Bosworth Smith's "Mohammed and Mohammedanism" where he says of Mohammed, "The chief blots in his fame are not after his undisputed victory, but during his years of checkered warfare at Medina. And such as they are, they are distributed very evenly over the whole of that time. In other words he did very occasionally give way to strong temptation, but there was no gradual sapping of moral principles, and no deadening of conscience,— a very important distinction. One or two acts of summary and uncompromising punishment, possibly one or two acts of cunning, and, after Cadijah's death, the violation of one law which he had imposed on others and had always hitherto kept himself form no very long bill of indictment against one who always admitted himself a man of like passions with other men, who was ignorant of the Christian moral law, and who attained power after difficulties and dangers and mis-

conceptions, which might have turned the best of men into a suspicious and sanguinary tyrant."

Sprenger, another capable authority, writes: "What Christian pope or king — to say nothing of Oriental rulers, with whom it is fair to compare him — had as great temptations and succumbed to them as little as did Mohammed?"

Judging from what is asserted about him by his numerous biographers, especially within the past one hundred years, instead of declaring him "an epileptic tyrant," as a certain writer did, we are rather disposed to say of him what Vasari said of Raphael,— that "he enhanced the gracious sweetness of a disposition more than usually gentle by the fair ornament of a winning amenity."

CHAPTER XIV

CHAPTERS have been written concerning the Prophet's personal appearance, and until a century ago, when intelligent inquiry began, the slanders of the Crusaders and their sympathizers prevailed, and were, if possible, exaggerated throughout Christendom. He was represented with horns, with cloven feet, with features expressive of malignancy and sensuality. But from eye-witnesses and the more authentic native traditions we learn another story.

Not only the Crusaders and contemporary Christian historians stooped to revile a book they had not read and a man they did not know, as is the way at times with sectaries, but the earlier reformers also, still tainted with the poison of intolerance, used slanderous pens in his denunciation. Luther, who hated Mohammed almost as much as he hated the pope and the Jews, in his commentary on the "Book of Daniel" said that the "little horn" meant Mohammed and the little horn's eyes were the Alkoran, or law, by which he ruled. "Christ will come upon him," he said, "with fire and brimstone." When he wrote this puerility he had never seen the Koran, and naturally knew nothing about Islamism except what came from bigoted predecessors.

A certain Brother Richards' *Confutateo Alkoran,*

dated 1300 A. D., formed the almost exclusive basis of his argument. This Brother Richards, according to his own account, "had gone in quest of knowledge to Babylon, the beautiful city of the Sarissins, had learned Arabic and had been inured in the evil ways of the Sarissins." When he returned he wrote a book, and this is the way it begins:

"At the time of the Emperor Heraclies there was a man, yea a divil, and the first-born child of satan . . . who wallowed in . . . and dealt in the black art, and his name it was Machumet."

This was the book translated by Luther from Latin into German, and his notes on some of Brother Richards' ingenious inventions are at least amusing, if not edifying, for example: "Oh, fie, for shame, you horrid devil, you damned Mohammedan!" Again, "Oh, Satan, Satan, you shall pay for that!" Luther was evidently as familiar with Satan as Mohammed was with the archangel Gabriel. Or again, coming across a passage ascribed to Mohammed by Brother Richards that was unusually contrary to Christian teaching, "That's it. Devils, Sarissins, Turks,— it's all the same." Or, "Here the devil smells a rat." All of these and numerous other exclamations but show the childish credulity of Luther, his abhorrence of iniquity. And what a book it was that claimed for its author the pious Brother Richards!

This translation by Luther of the monk's imaginative history was the beginning of Protestant denunciation of Mohammed. Even the gentle Melanchthon,

also getting his "facts" from Brother Richards' mendacious book, said: "Mohammed is inspired by the devil. . . . The Mohammedan sect is altogether made up of blasphemy, robbery, and shameful lust."

On the papal side, Genebrara charges the German reformers, chiefly Luther himself, with attempting to introduce Mohammedanism into the Christian world and to take over the whole clergy into that faith. And a certain Maracci is of the opinion that Mohammedanism and Lutherism are not very dissimilar. "Witness," he says, "the iconoclastic tendencies of both!" More systematically, Martinus Alphonsus Vivaldus marshals up exactly thirteen points to prove that there is not a shadow of difference between them. "Mohammed," he writes, "points to that which is written down. So do these heretics. He has altered the time of the fasts; they abhor all fasts. He has changed Sunday into Friday; they observe no rest day at all. He rejects the worship of the saints. So do these Lutherans. Mohammed has no baptism; nor does Calvin consider such requisite. They both allow divorce." Whereupon Roland, on the side of the Reformers, wants to know about "the prayers for the dead, which both Mohammed and the pope enjoin; the intercession of angels; likewise the visiting of graves; the pilgrimages to holy places; the fixed fasts; the merits of works,— all of equal consequence both to Catholic and Mosleman."

How the foolish curses and malignant protests against Mohammedans of such partisans as Prideaux,

Spanheims, and Herbelots,— such as "wicked impostor," "dastardly liars," "devils incarnate," "behemoths," "beasts," "Korahs," and other epithets equally emphatic,— give room, step by step, to the more temperate protest, more civil names, less outrageous misrepresentations of both the faith and the man, until Goethe and Carlyle and that modern phalanx of truth-seekers,— Sprenger, Amari, Nöldeke, Muir, Burckhardt, Weil, and many others,— have taught the world at large that Mohammedanism to the contrary is "a thing of vitality, fraught with a thousand fruitful germs; and that Mohammed, whether his revelations were due to epilepsy, catalepsy, or whatever view of his character be held, has earned a place in the golden book of humanity."

Until a hundred years ago, or less, his enemies and those who knew him not have accused him of every known vice. They represented him, too, as being hideously ugly. Those who knew him personally and familiarly and whose opinions are founded upon impartial study, tell another story. Their descriptions are so vivid and they enter into so many details in the delineation of his personal appearance and of his conduct in private and public that you would almost know him if you met him in the desert among a thousand turbaned heads, or at an afternoon tea in a Tuxedo or Prince Albert.

He was of middle height, rather slender, but broad of shoulder, wide of chest, strong of bone and muscle. His head was massive, strongly developed, hair dark

and curling, and even in advanced age it was only "sprinkled by about twenty gray hairs," which were produced, according to his devoted disciples, "by the agonies of the revelations." The minuteness of various descriptions show the affection with which he was regarded. If possible, they would have numbered all the hairs of his head, instead of the twenty white ones.

His face was oval in shape, what Lavater called "the poetic face," slightly tawny in color. His fine, long, arched eyebrows were divided by a vein, which Carlyle attached much importance to, and which throbbed visibly in moments of passion. Great black restless eyes shone out from under heavy eyelashes; his nose was large, slightly aquiline, and it is pleasant to know that he gave great care to his teeth, which were well set and of dazzling whiteness. A full beard framed his face. "His hands were as silk and satin, like those of a woman,"—that is, the Oriental woman's hands, not those of one of Albrecht Dürer's women,—"His step was quick and elastic, yet firm as one that steps from a high to a low place."

Another writer said that his gait in walking was as if he were descending a mountain. His hands and feet were large, but "so light was his step," relates another admirer, "that he left no track on the sand he trod upon."

"In turning his face he would also turn his whole body," says another adoring eye-witness. "His entire gait and presence were dignified and imposing," writes another. "His countenance was mild and pensive and

his laugh was rarely more than a smile," is the way another venerating disciple begins a description of his master.

" Oh, my little son," reads a description in the musical tongue of Arabia, " hadst thou seen him thou wouldst have said thou hadst seen the sun rising." Another witness asserts, " I saw him in a moonlight night. Sometimes I looked at his beauty, sometimes I looked at the moon; his dress was striped with red, and he was brighter and more beautiful to me than the moon." To get the whole significance of the above, the reader, if he has never passed a night in Arabia, must imagine the sublime majesty of the moon as it appears to the people of the desert.

Cæsar was bald and regretted it; Byron, curly-headed, and proud of it, and Mohammed rejoiced in " glossy locks falling in graceful curves below the lobes of his ears." These touches in the delineation of a charming character are the brush-marks in portraits lovingly painted by admirers. Impostors are never loved, never admired, by persons who know them intimately.

The historian Gibbon, who wrote a life of Mohammed, and who was one of the earliest unprejudiced investigators, calls him " the greatest and the last of the Apostles of God." And Spanheim, a famous Arabic scholar applauded by Mr. Sale, the translator of the Koran, though regarding Mohammed a pretender, yet acknowledges him " to have been richly furnished with natural endowments, beautiful in his per-

son, of a subtle wit, of agreeable behavior, showing liberality to the poor, courtesy to everyone, fortitude against his enemies, and above all a high reverence for the name of God; to have been severe against the perjured, and against adulterers, murderers, slanderers, prodigals, the covetous, false witnesses, and so on; to have been a great preacher of patience, charity, mercy, beneficence, gratitude, honoring of parents and superiors, and a frequent celebrator of the divine praise."

This testimony of one not in accord with the sincerity of Mohammed's claims shows at least that *epilepsy* is possible with the possession and practice of the highest faculties of the mind,— a fact which ought to give encouragement to all similarly afflicted, for Mohammed's attacks were frequent and presented every serious phase of the malady and continued from infancy to death.

In his habits he bestowed great attention upon his person. He was extremely simple in attire and was especially careful of " his teeth, which, although two of them were slightly apart in front, were otherwise beautifully even and white until after one of his battles, when a blow which nearly killed him knocked one of them out." His hands and hair and the fashion of his simple but graceful garments were matters of concern to him; and if he was licentious, as we believe he was not, he did not seem to be concerned or made irreligious by it, as the licentious are among us.

His eating and drinking, his dress and the furniture

of his home, were almost primitive, even when he had reached the fullness of power and had, figuratively, the world at his feet. "His household," says Carlyle, "was the frugalest, his common diet barley bread and water, and sometimes for months there was not a fire once lighted on his hearth." He made a point from the beginning of giving away his "superfluities." The only luxuries he indulged in besides arms were certain yellow boots, a present from the Negus of Abyssinia. He highly prized arms and greatly admired their beautiful workmanship, and who, knowing Moorish arms and their jeweled beauty, does not admire them?

Perfumes, however, he liked as a cat likes catnip. He reveled in pleasant odors as the Japanese do in cherry blossoms, and he was as nervously afraid of bodily pain as Dr. Johnson was of death, and would cry under it like a child. Eminently impractical in all common things of life, as poets and the extremely devout often are, he was gifted, we have seen, with fine powers of imagination, elevation of mind, delicacy and refinement of feeling, and was "more modest," it was said, "than a virgin behind her curtain."

He was most indulgent to his inferiors, never allowing his awkward little page to be scolded, no matter what he did. "Ten years," said Anas, his servant, "was I about the Prophet without receiving a rebuke or an impatient word."

Think of the opulence and of the retinues of servants of contemporary and subsequent princes, Christian princes and popes and even bishops of the

church founded by the Fisherman, as compared with the simplicity of this "autocrat of the East." Besides multitudes of retainers, many of the "Christian" rulers in those "dear old days of faith" had their own private and particular company of honorable assassins and poisoners. And their positions, too, were not sinecures. Mohammed's fondness for children and loyalty to his own family were marked characteristics. He was untiringly affectionate to his own people and children. He was interested in everything relating to them. One of his boys died on his breast in the smoky house of his attendant, a blacksmith's wife. He was fond of other people's children also. He would stop them on the street, pat them on the cheek, and before preaching would often take one of his children into the pulpit and hold it up in his arms that the whole congregation might see it and rejoice with him. It has been said also of him that he never struck anyone in his life, and never attempted to lord it over a human being, high or low, and constantly disclaimed particular distinction, except in his capacity as Prophet.

Contrast the clemency of this "sensual tyrant" with the inhumanity, say, of Frederick the Great, of Prussia, or of Peter the Great, of Russia, or of his irascible father; or with the religious intolerance of a saintly inquisitor planning new methods of loving correction for heresy; or with that other exemplary Western ruler of whom it was said "that he never saw human shins without being overcome with the impulse to kick them."

The worst expression Mohammed made use of in his conversations, even under the greatest provocation, was, "What has come to him?" When asked to curse someone, he replied, "I have not been sent to curse, but to be a mercy to mankind."

His wives, who resided each in her own home around the plain abode of the Prophet, and who lived in the greatest harmony with one another, unitedly testify to the gentleness of his character, the unaffected nature of his continuous kindness and consideration. And since all his wives but one had been widows they were in a condition when he married them to compare him with other men.

His language was continuously inoffensive and chaste; his thoughts and visions were exalted and pure. In all the volumes of the Koran and Sunna and in all that has been said of him by his contemporaries and intimates there is not reported an unbecoming allusion nor an indelicate word.

His habits were the simplest and most humane. He visited the sick, followed any bier he met to the cemetery, accepted the invitation of a slave to dinner, milked his own ewes, and waited on himself. Another tradition — and these little touches, love-pats of affection, reveal the man and the regard his intimates had for him — says that "he never first withdrew his hand out of another man's hand, and turned not before the other had turned." "His hand," we read elsewhere,— and accounts like these give a good index of what the Arabs expected their Prophet to be, and of

how lovingly they regarded his every movement,— " was the most generous, his breast the most courageous, his tongue the most truthful. He was the faithful protector of those he precepted. He was the sweetest and most agreeable person in conversation. Those who saw him were suddenly filled with reverence, and those who came near him loved him. They who described him would say, 'I have never seen his like either before or after.' "

He was of great taciturnity. But when he spoke it was with emphasis and deliberation, and one could never forget what he said. He was, however, restless, often low-spirited and downcast as to heart and eyes. Yet he could at times break through those broodings, become gay and jocular, chiefly among his own. He would then delight, like Luther, in telling entertaining stories, fairy tales and the like, would romp with his children, play with their toys, as after his first wife's death, marking the beginning of the break-down, he was wont to play with the dolls his new wives had brought into his home.

Although he was like the Hebrew in so many tenets of his faith, yet how different he was in the desire to extend the benefit of his religion to others. The message of the Hebrew prophet was usually confined to his own people; the Arabian intended his faith for the world, to be conveyed in whatever way was thought best. The Jew might seem to be forfeiting his privileges as one of the chosen people by communicating the faith to the Gentile; the Arab came short of his duty

MOHAMMED.

This is merely one of the many ideal conceptions of Mohammed.

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if he did not do so. And it is this enjoined duty of the Koran that has made the Mussulman the most effective missionary in all the world.

There are over fifty million Mohammedans among the native people of India to-day,—"every fourth or fifth man you meet is a Muslim,"—yet India is as much of a foreign country to the Arabian as it is to us. The same might be said of Africa. Ever since the conqueror Akbar in the early days of Islam carried his conquests from the Nile to the Pillars of Hercules, driving his horse into the waves of the Atlantic and lamenting that he could go no farther in that direction, Islam has held on to the whole of the Barbary states,—that is to say, for a period of twelve hundred years.

Their possessions there include all that portion of the world which in ancient times served as the only connection between Africa and the outer world, including the regions of Egypt and Phœnicia, and of Roman and vandal civilizations. The headquarters of African and the birthplace of Latin Christianity this, as the names of Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, and Augustine may well remind us. And what has Mohammedanism taught these people in all that period? Invariably that "God, there is no God but Him, the Living, the Eternal. Slumber doth not overtake Him, neither sleep. To Him belongeth all that is in heaven and earth. . . . His throne extendeth over heaven and earth, and the upholding of both is no burden to Him. He is the Lofty and the Great." And that to be an Islamite is to be submissive to Him.

That is what Mohammedanism teaches about God and submission. About duty and conduct they teach as follows: "Oh, true believer, surely wine and lots [gambling], and images, and divining rods are an abomination, and the work of Satan. Then forever avoid them that you may prosper. Satan seeketh to sow dissension and hatred among you by means of wine and lots, and to divert you from remembering God and prayer. Will you not therefore abstain from them?"

Although they were slave-owners and slave-dealers, yet the spread of Mohammedanism means the abolition of slavery. No believer can be held by a Mohammedan as a slave, and of slaves who were not Mohammedans the Prophet said: "See that ye feed them with such food as ye eat yourselves. And clothe them with the dress ye wear yourselves, for they are the servants of the Lord, and not to be tormented." "How many times a day," asks a follower of Mohammed, "ought I to forgive a slave who displeases me?" "Seventy times a day," replied the Prophet.

CHAPTER XV

THUS Mohammed, although the most vilified of men until late years, would seem to have been one of the world's greatest benefactors, laboring, in spite of his affliction, according to his light, to bring men to God and to establish righteousness.

He was, perhaps, incapable of creating a moral and political system of endless value to his countrymen, as someone has asserted; but, as Gibbon says, "he breathed among his countless faithful a spirit of charity and friendship, recommended the practice of the social virtues, and checked by his laws and precepts the thirst for revenge and the oppression of widows and orphans."

It is not only the propagation but the unchanged permanency and uniformity of Islamism that when known elicits wonder.

Christianity as exhibited to-day, especially in its Eastern forms, and lack of form, might not be recognized by the earlier followers of that Jesus who came to establish not so much a church as a life, not so much a creed as a system of ethics, founded upon the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. If they but saw the austere simplicity of some places of worship, the meretricious gorgeousness of others, the glittering habiliments of some of her ministers, the uncouth

disregard of appearance and lack of form of others, the intense attention to the narrow interests of "mint and cummin" in some communions, the liberality, amounting to license, of others, yet all *united in essentials,* and resulting, it has been said, in glory to God and benefit to man,— we reiterate, if believers from the first century of Christianity, with its primitive religious practices and absence of the spectacular, could but see the church in its various varieties of worship to-day, they would certainly be surprised. But Islam, in unalterableness of creed and simplicity of service, is ever the same, and the "I believe in God and Mohammed the Apostle of God" is the uniform and definite conviction of all believers. There is everywhere and in all tongues the same Quaker-like plainness of worship, and from the Atlantic to the Ganges the Koran is acknowledged as the fundamental Code, not only of theology, but of jurisprudence as well: not only the property but the conduct of the believer is controlled and protected by the will of God as expressed in the Koran.

If he, Mohammed, assumed a false commission, it was in order to inculcate salutary doctrines. He generously and piously claimed as the foundation of his religion the truth and the sanities of prior Jewish and Christian revelations, as he understood them, as well as the virtues and moral conceptions of their founders. Consistent, it would seem, with *their* opposition to idolatry and in deference to his own exalted conception of the nature of God, the idols of Arabia were broken, including the three hundred and sixty of super-

imposed importance of the Caaba. And his rewards and punishments of a future state, also in deference, we imagine, to Christian precedent, were presented in images which, though puerile to us, were best calculated to influence sensuous generations.

It was not until after the death of his first wife, with whom he lived until his forty-fifth year a life of exemplary fidelity, that he became on occasion cruel and sensual. Yet he was not nearly so much so as were Moses and many other Jewish rulers, or many nominally Christian kings; and it is a fact, too, that but few men attained such power among a people so savage and licentious.

The "barbarities" of Mohammed are but the gambols of a lamb or the playfulness of a kitten as compared with the deliberate cruelties of Old Testament rulers, or with the iniquitous doings of that "most Christian king," Philip II., of Spain, for example, who was coerced by a fanatical resolve "for the love of God" to destroy *all* who merely did not believe as he wished them to believe. Alva in a letter tells Philip that after Holy Week he is going to cut off the heads of eight hundred people for differences of opinion about the Christian religion. The holy office on February 16, 1658, condemned *all* the inhabitants of the Netherlands to death as heretics. Philip ten days after the decree of the Inquisition ordered it to be "carried into instant execution without regard to age, sex, or condition." Motley, commenting, says: "This is the most concise death warrant ever framed,

— three millions of people, men, women, and children, sentenced to death in three lines."

Moslemism, like Christianity, as intended by its founder, and unlike this, is tolerant of all religions. It is not at variance with good moral standards, nor is it in contravention of just laws.

"Religion," says the Koran, "is not turning your face to the east or to the west; but the religious are those who believe in God and the last day, and give their wealth to the poor and the wayfaring man, and to those who ask charity, and for the redemption of captives, and those who perform their prayers and give alms, and who keep their engagements when they have made them, and are patient under misfortune and affliction, and in the time of adversity. These are they who are in possession of the truth; these, they are the pious."

CHAPTER XVI

SOMEONE, in a pessimistic mood, perhaps Nietzsche, said: "We are compounded of sincerity and insincerity in everything. The laughter of the brightest, the prayers of the most devout, are tainted with insincerity, not because we have not the will to be otherwise but because we have not the strength."

This, if true, ought at least to make us humble. Yet judging by our own reading, this theory would apply less to Mohammed than to any other of the human family known to us. Nevertheless, sincerity is not the greatest faculty of the mind. It is indeed a much overrated quality; and much good work may be done without it, and much bad work may be done with it. Every creed, no matter how irrational, has its fanatics and martyrs. They may be found on the side of every error and fanaticism and bigotry; and they are always sincere. Sincerity has been urged as an excuse for the most barbarous crimes. It is often nothing but preposterous egotism — man presumptuously putting himself in the place of Deity, and, as he ignorantly thinks, audaciously performing the function of Deity.

It is the power behind sincerity that gives it sanctity.

The Mohammedanism of Mohammed in the beginning was so tolerant, sympathetic, and full of compassion for men and for the lower animals that it puts

even St. Francis to shame. He came five hundred years after Mohammed, eleven after Christ, and ought to have known better; indeed, if his regard for the lower animals had been anything but an affectation and pose he would not have been the hero of "The Story of Brother Juniper," which see in "The Little Flowers of St. Francis."

We may admit Mohammed to have been sincere, then, in his claim of being a Prophet of God and the receiver of divine honor, without claiming that sincerity justifies all things. He was as sincere as was Albrecht Dürer or Lucas Cranach in painting portraits, without our claiming that the portraits looked like the originals. Indeed, we trust they did not. He was as sincere as Turner in painting atmosphere; or John Knox in denouncing Mary, Queen of Scots; as John Wesley or Adam Clark in itinerating for Christ; as Bernard of Clairvaux or Gregory in denouncing the wickedness of their times and the depravity of the religious orders and the clergy.

He was as devout as any Christian, as loyal to his convictions as any saint. Yet much of what he taught was due to the poet and seer in him rather than to the reformer. His malady,— hallucinations both of sight and hearing and automatisms, peculiar psychic conditions, and the rest,— but gives color to his impressions and oracularness to his picturesque speech. He was not always the same. He had his periods of hope and despair, like most men of serious character. On more than one occasion his despair nearly ended in

self-slaughter. The landscape of every man's life suffers many changes: sometimes, with all its placidity, there may be a smoldering volcano in the distance, ready at a moment's notice to belch out lava and flame; sometimes, a roaring cataract, tumbling into a bottomless abyss; again an unrippled lake, reflecting earth and heaven and all the endearments of life; or some scene of bacchanalian or social revelry, implying or ending in ruin; or it may be a river bearing on its broad bosom treasure-laden argosies from many lands. Sometimes it exhibits the splendor of a Turner or Claude; or the light and shadow of a nymph-haunted pastoral by Poussin or Corot; or a riot of extravagancies, like the tortuous caverns, rent and beetling mountains, overhanging rocks, and tempest-twisted trees of Salvator Rosa, fitting haunts of robbers and assassins. Sometimes also the background may be encircled with battlemented clouds, enclosing armies of contending forces; or perhaps it may be but a sorrow-haunted cemetery or peaceful procession of worshipers returning from prayer. Or it may suffer a sea change, becoming an endless ocean, one with the sky, upon the undulating bosom of which he is lulled, "like a child rocked by the beating of its mother's heart" until lost in smile-producing dreams. Thus Mohammed, too, ran his gamut of transmutations from profound sadness to exuberant joy.

No one can get away from his nature any more than from his shadow,— the fundamental bias of his mind, which is as ineffaceable as a pricking of India ink or a

scar. Mohammed had his dreams and visions, ineradicable idiosyncrasies, liability to discrepancies of conduct, and failure to realize ideals. He did not claim to be different from other men except in being "selected by the Almighty to be His preacher." Other inspired or deluded persons, just as you take them, before and since Mohammed have also believed themselves called especially of God to do specific work, without being considered apostles of deceit. "Blessed is the man," says Carlyle, "who has found his work, and who finding it can carry it to completion."

This, then, was the man that had tamed the hydra of anarchy and quelled the fervor of belligerent tribes, not with roar of cannon nor gleam of scimitar as much as by prayer, by the preaching of righteousness, by the proclamation of the unity and holiness of God, by promises of rewards to the faithful and fulminations of protracted wrath to evil-doers, by the convincing eloquence and mysticism of a book, by the obliteration of distinctions of birth, by the enactment of just laws. And so powerful and beneficial was the impression he made upon his people that after death the remembrance of him was so vital and sacred that it gave special sanctity and sacredness to everything he had either said or touched.

It was not until the setting in, we would venture the diagnosis, of premature mental decay that the Prophet, as before asserted, veered from the monogamous ideal. Yet, withal he boldly proclaimed himself the Paraclete — see Acts of the Apostles — that was to come to com-

plete the unfinished work of Moses and the prophets, including Jesus,— "that is to say, to bring the whole world back to God, as *they* had brought only a part of it, and to manifest such a recognition of God as is exhibited in honest living and in a God-revering life."

The unspeakable Turk, who as barbarian conquered Arabia and then crudely adopted the religion of the vanquished, has not become barbarous, if he is always so, by following but rather by disregarding in important aspects the teachings of the Arabian, as the depraved and superstitious with us are barbarous by abandoning rather than by following "the Light which was the life of the world." And the religion of Mohammed is no more responsible for the cruelties and moral delinquencies of its semi-barbarous believers than Christianity is for the lecheries of Lucretia or Cæsar Borgia or Pope Alexander VI.; or for the depravity of Catherine II., of Russia, or of Henry VIII., or Charles II., of England; or for the malignancies of the Knights of Malta and the Crusaders; or for the perversions of the Knights of the Temple; or for the "pornocracy" of the church in the Middle Ages; or for the bloody massacre of St. Bartholomew; or for the Sicilian vespers; or for the horrors of the Inquisition; or for the terrors of the Thirty Years' War; or for the austerities of Calvin or Knox; or for the "immoderacies," as Erasmus calls them, of Luther; or for the inanities of many of the canonized saints; or for the occasional comparatively diminutive discrepancies of a few present-day Christians. Flowers

are not judged by their sprouts nor trees by the worms that infest their bark. Instead of vilifying other religions it is better to avoid bringing discredit on our own.

CHAPTER XVII

Like Milton, Linnæus, Cuvier, and Gibbon, Mohammed, as indicated by his unusually large head, was likely somewhat hydrocephalic, a fact which he attempted in vain, it would seem, to conceal by letting his hair grow long. He had other so named "stigmata of degeneracy,"— large ears, hands, and feet, which but show, in spite of Lombroso, how little confidence can be placed in these signs as indications of character.

Byron's head, to the contrary, was more than ordinarily small. Yet he was born in convulsions — unusual in any child, but especially in small-headed children — and subsequently deviated so much from his normal national type that neither his physiognomy, as you may have noticed, nor his character is English. This may be observed in many of the numerous contemporary portraits of Byron. None of them are typically English; and a very familiar one, which for distinction we call the portrait with the calla-lily collar, is decidedly Greekish. Remove the collar and he becomes Apollo.

Geniuses frequently do this,— that is, depart from the common standard of their country in certain anatomic as well as mental qualities, which is the reason at times for their not being understood.

Judging from the past, to be genuinely despised and rejected and spat upon by your contemporaries, you must be extraordinarily superior. This may be a comfort to the reader later on, since none of us are, but always to be, appreciated at our own estimate. Such persons are so exceptional to the placid uniformity of ordinary men who are not distinguished even in their vices, the easiest way except martyrdom of becoming distinguished, that it takes generations of special training before they are properly appreciated.

Mohammed, who was as fortunate in the selection of his nation as in his parents and occupation, which, like Hesiod, King David, and Allan Ramsey, was sometimes that of a shepherd, was an exception to this rule so universally applicable to men of great ability. When medieval Christian countries groveled in semi-barbarism and usually assassinated their benefactors, Arabia was getting ready for the reception of her Prophet by the cultivation of language, oratory, poetry, and all the arts of appreciation. On what other hypotheses can we explain the quick acceptance and apparently miraculous growth of that Islam and Islamic culture that became such an inspiration to other nations and continued so for centuries?

As if not to be diverted by impedimenta said to be insurmountable, Mohammed's matrimonial experiences offer in his own person a convincing refutation of the theory held by Goethe, Lord Bacon, and many others: namely,— that a wife is an obstruction to great enterprise, and that the best works and those of greatest

advantage to the public have proceeded from unmarried or childless men. Fresh from the study of Mohammed, we cannot agree with them. And Bach, the musician, with his eleven sons and nine daughters, not to mention symphonies and many other compositions, would seem to be an emphatic refutation, if anything were needed to refute such an absurd theory. Not only in this, but in every relation of life the Prophet's noble serenity of soul created sympathy and reverence,— the greater the intimacy the greater the esteem, for he was a model even to his intimates. "In all the time I served the Prophet," says one of his servants, "he never as much as said 'Uff' to me." As contrasted with this see *Corpus Historicorum Medii Ævi,* G. Eccard, vol. ii; also John Buchardi's *Diarium,* pp. 21, 34. Buchardi was high chamberlain to Pope Alexander VI., and ought to know.

Nor did his greatness need the meretricious aid of pomp, like so many self-exalted pretenders. When he had conquered his world, he made a triumphant entry into the vanquished city of Medina,— without the barbaric but usual accompaniment of chained captives,— riding on a white mule, carrying only a parasol for protection against the broiling sun, and with but an unfurled turban fastened to the end of a pole as an imperial banner.

CHAPTER XVIII

His views of slavery were in advance of those of Judaism or Christianity as then understood. He did not abolish it as he might have done and as he did idolatry, fetish worship, promiscuity, gambling, drinking, revenge, polyandry, usury, intolerance, and oppression of widows, orphans, and captives taken in battle; yet in declaring that "all Mohammedans are brothers" he would not have thought of discriminating between black and white, and that "no man should hold his brother in bondage" he set free vast numbers of slaves. For the moment a slave owned by a Mohammedan becomes a Mohammedan he becomes a free man.

He made it an offense too in selling slaves to separate the mother from the child,— a custom that was in vogue by other people centuries after Mohammed made it a crime.

Another law appertaining to slavery from the Koran is, "If slaves come to you, you shall not imprison them, nor sell them at public sale, though no claimant appear, but redeem them; and it is forbidden to you to send them away." Thus may be seen that the fugitive slave law prevailed among Mohammedans centuries before it was thought of by Christian or Jewish slave-owners. Again, "Unto such of your

slaves as desire a written instrument allowing them to redeem themselves on paying a certain amount,"— the fee of manumission as we called it,—" write one; and if ye know good of them, give them of the riches of God which He hath given you."

His utterances about repentance appeal also to reason. " Verily repentance will be accepted of God by those who do evil ignorantly and then repent speedily. Unto them God will turn, for He is knowing and wise. But no repentance will be accepted from those who do evil until the time of death, when death presenteth itself unto one of them, and he saith, ' Verily, I repent now.' "

Thus a death-bed repentance is a futility, according to Mohammed. So that no serving the devil during the activity of vigorous life and then dedicating its last enfeebled moments to God counts with Islam.

Persons prejudiced against Mohammed may condemn him too for his sensual paradise. But in fact no paradise can be imagined which is not sensual, because, as John Locke has proved, no idea can be entertained by man except through the medium of his senses; it therefore follows that if he is to entertain any idea of a paradise at all it must of necessity be sensuous.

A writer in the *Westminster Review,* says Mr. Higgins in his book " Mohammed the Illustrious," has so well vindicated the Prophet of the East that the author cannot resist the temptation of giving a rather long extract from his essay. Says this writer:

"After all the abuse that has been thrown upon Mohammed for his paradise — and it makes the head and front of every man's vituperative argument — the simple fact is that he promised the restoration of man to the Mosaic Eden, where, if there were many Adams it was equally inevitable there must be many Eves. This may not reach the elevation of 'What eye hath not seen nor ear heard,' but it at all events attains the point at which the Christian theology sets out. His words continually are, '*Theirs* shall be the gardens of Eden;' and then he proceeds to enumerate the rivers, the trees, the apples, and above all the 'helpmates meet,' of the Mosaic account. It must be remembered that rivers are as rare in Arabia as land is in Venice, and that the other delights of the Islam heaven are as comparatively rare. That he excludes woman from his paradise is one of the falsehoods that have been fastened on him by his enemies, for he reiterates the declaration that 'whoso worketh good, whether male or female, shall enter paradise, where the same glories are distinctly promised to both.' And lest there should be any doubt whether the wives of believers are to keep them company, he expressly describes the faithful as entering the garden of Eden 'with their fathers, their wives, and their children,' while in another place he says, 'They and their wives shall recline in shady groves.'

"But the Eden of Milton is not more chaste, and is infinitely less reserved, than that of the Arabian; and no contrast can be stronger than between his

imagery and that of the Hebrew poetry, which he might have taken for his model.

"In his description of the women of paradise there is nothing to excite voluptuous ideas. They are said to be virgins — like the virgin daughters of Bethuel, and like the other believers they are restored to the prime of youthful beauty in which mankind may be supposed to have come from the hands of the Creator.

"But as in the 'Song of Solomon' they have neither necks like towers of 'ivory,' nor 'mouths that cause the lips of those that are asleep to speak,' nor 'bosoms like clusters of the vine,' nor 'breasts like two young roes that are twins feeding among lilies,' nor 'the joints of their thighs like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.' They neither invite their paradisiacal partners to kiss them with the kisses of their mouths, nor to lie like a bunch of myrrh, . . . nor to turn, and be till daybreak like a young hart upon the mountains of spices, nor to get him to the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense till the shadows flee away, nor to take a thousand current coins from his vineyard, while the keeper of the fruit claims two hundred in return, nor to tempt him to the fields under seductive promises. . . . These are the luxuries of other creeds, the figures which the nations of Europe think fitted to excite religious hopes and pious expectations."

"The spouses of the Arabian teacher sit with their dark eyes cast down modestly in the presence of their husbands, like pearls concealing themselves within

their shells," and even the patriarchal polygamy seems forgotten as something tolerable on earth but not good enough for heaven. The beautiful pairs recline by the *never failing waters* of heaven, surrounded by the harmless luxuries which constitute domestic comfort or splendor in the East. And if they sometimes fill their cup with a richer draught, it is described as innocent and harmless, with no power to disturb the intellect nor disorder the mind. There converse is unearthly and pure, and timed with the delights of souls escaped from earth, and safe in heaven.

> "No vain discourse there heard, nor thought of sin,
> But this one word, peace, peace, (Salaam, Salaam)."

Such are literally translated the words used by Mohammed in describing Paradise, so that the reader may see for himself that even the heaven of Islam is not "the coarse sensual resort," as has been said, "invented by a licentious epileptic, to lure his dupes to destruction."

CHAPTER XIX

MEN may be known by the things they laugh at, the things they admire and dislike, by the guardedness and correctness of their speech, by their taste in the matter of metaphors and comparisons. Mohammed's speech was always striking and dignified, full of poetic allusion and stately diction, though often drawing his illustrations from his own experience and the commonplace occurrences of every-day life.

In talking of one of the rivers of paradise — a river was the great wonder and luxury of the man living in the arid desert — he said, "It is smoother than cream, sweeter than honey, and more odoriferous than musk," thus alluding to the simple pleasures of the unpretentious home in which he temperately delighted, and where his almost exclusive food consisted of milk, honey, olives, and the smell of musk, with barley bread and water his occasional luxury.

On another occasion he said: "The sword is the key of heaven and of hell. A drop of blood shed in the cause of God, a night spent in *alms,* is of more avail than two months of fasting and prayer. At the day of judgment the wounds of the defenders of the faith shall be as resplendent as vermilion and as odoriferous as musk, and the loss of their limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubim." In his

figures of speech he thus frequently indicates a child-like delight and ascribes childlike importance to flying — he was as fond evidently of floating in space as a modern aviator, and seems also to have been as much addicted to harmless olfactory revelries as topers are to the degrading revelries of drink.

He was fond of tautologies, as we might call them, of the sword, recurring to the figurative use of that favorite implement frequently, the only use to which he ever personally put it. Such lines as Christ's "I came not to bring peace but a sword" and Mohammed's "Paradise is under the shadow of the sword" readily lend themselves to identity of interpretation, and there are many such parallel passages in the Bible and in the Koran.

This picturesqueness of descriptive comparison was a national trait. We remember one of the Prophet's officers, in alluding in the stately diction of his poetic race to the cause of his own promotion, said: "The Prince of Believers spread before him the arrows of his quivers and tried every one of them by biting its wood,"— meaning that his imperial master had submitted him to a severe test and he had passed it.

Another distinction of the Prophet, according to Gibbon, was that he taught the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary centuries before it was accepted by the Mother Church. This conviction, it would seem, was proclaimed by Mohammed in the beginning of his career, and not until twelve hundred years afterward was it accepted as a

doctrine of Catholic faith. The dispute about it lasted through the centuries, and at one time was nearly as effective as the Reformation in splitting Christianity in two.

It was finally settled by the church on December 8, 1854, that it should become an article of universal belief, a dozen centuries after it had been proclaimed by Mohammed. He also at this early date included the Virgin Mary among "the four perfect women,"—Miriam, the sister of Moses; Cadijah, his first wife; the Virgin Mary, and Fatima, his daughter. And by the way the "Boycott," the invention of which has been ascribed to Irish patriotism, was used by certain semi-barbarous enemies as an instrument of coercion against Mohammed in the early part of his mission. The readers of Cæsar's Commentaries also will recall that he too used the method since known as the "Boycott" against a certain Gaulish king, who had been guilty of the impudence and the audacity of "annihilating one of his legions and two of his important generals."

Everything to Mohammed was a sign or symbol of Deity. "Look over the world," he says. "Is it not wonderful? If your eyes were open you would see that the Almighty made it for you. The great clouds, born in the deep bosom of Immensity, they are suspended by Allah to revive a dead earth; and grass and leafy palms, with their clusters of dates, are a sign of His consideration for man. . . . Your cattle, too, Allah made them, to change grass into milk for

you, and to give their skin for clothing." "And what of ships?" he continues. "Huge moving mountains, they spread out their cloth wings when heaven's winds drive them over the surface of the deep. Anon God has withdrawn the winds and they lie motionless and dead." "Miracle!" he cries. "What miracles would you have? Are not you miracles yourselves? You were small once, a few years ago you were not at all. Ye have beauty, strength, thought. Ye have compassion one upon another. He might have made you without compassion." "Old age comes on you and grey hairs. Your strength fades into feebleness. Ye sink down and again are not."

Thus to his eyes it is everywhere evident that the world is miraculous and that God made it; that this great solid earth is nothing but an evidence of the existence of the great Spirit back of it all. This in his heart he never seems to have lost sight of, but, to the contrary, implies in all his teachings that the God of nature has impressed His personality on *all* His works and His laws on the heart of man. To restore the knowledge of the one and the practise of the other he believed had been the aim of all true Prophets of religion, "beginning with Adam," and ending with himself. And he maintained, according to the united testimony of his wives,— surely a severe test,—"the dignity, gentleness, and enthusiasm of a Prophet to the end." He further believed that all children were born Islamites,— that is, submissive to the will of God,— and if not interfered with by false

teachers, would remain true to their heaven-given submission. This implied wonderful faith in God and in humanity. Islamism, he believed, prevailed from the beginning of time. Yet he was tolerant of all religions not interfering with just laws and not aggressively idolatrous.

"When the leaves of the book shall be unrolled
And when the Heaven shall be stripped away,
When Hell shall be made to blaze
And when Paradise shall be brought near,
Every soul shall know what it hath produced.
And whosoever shall have wrought an atom's worth of good shall behold it,
And whosoever shall have wrought an atom's worth of evil shall behold it."

See Weil's Geschichte des Chalifen, Manheim, 3 vols., 8vo, which is founded upon original research and which is one of the best books on the subject.

CHAPTER XX

"TILL the age of sixty years," says Gibbons, "the strength of Mohammed, in spite of his epileptic fits, was equal to the spiritual and temporal fatigues of his mission." During the four last years his health was on the decline. His mortal disease was a fever, which deprived him at times of the use of his reason.

As soon as he became aware of his danger he began to prepare for death. He beheld with firmness the approach of the last enemy, set free his slaves, gave minute directions about his funeral, and moderated the sorrow of his weeping friends by bestowing upon them the benediction of peace.

Three days before his decease he performed the function of public prayer, and, according to the testimony of his wives and companions, "maintained the dignity of an Apostle and the faith of an enthusiast to his death."

"In the beginning of his spiritual triumphs" he preached in a rude mosque erected by himself in connection with his dwelling in Medina. When he exhorted or prayed in the weekly assembly, the trunk of a palm tree was his resting-place, and so wedded was he to simple primitive conditions that it was long before he indulged himself in the use of pulpit or a chair.

In a familiar discourse with friends he had mentioned a special prerogative which he desired; namely, — that "the angel of death should not be allowed to take his soul without respectfully asking his permission." The request was granted, the scribe confidently asserts, and Mohammed immediately fell into the agony of dissolution, his head reclining on the lap of Ayesha, the best beloved of his wives.

Nothing was as touching in his life as was his taking off. The common cares of life had been taken from him by the motherly hand of Cadijah, but heavier ones now seemed to weigh down his whole being.

Returning from the victory of Mecca he occupied himself again with the carrying out of his expedition against Syria, but fell ill soon after his return. "One night while suffering from an attack of fever," says a contemporary, "he went to the cemetery of Medina, and prayed and wept upon the tombs, praising the dead, and wishing that he himself might be delivered from the storms of the world. At last, unable to go around, he chose the home of Ayesha, situated near the mosque, as his abode during his sickness. He took part in the public prayers as long as he could. Finally, feeling that his hour had come, he once more preached to the people. He asked, like Moses, whether he had wronged any one, and if so he would make reparation. His words were: "Is there any one whom I have unjustly punished? I submit my own back to the lash of retaliation. Have I aspersed a

Mussulman? Let him proclaim my faults in the face of the congregation. Has any one been despoiled of his goods by me? The little I have shall compensate him." One cried, "I am entitled to three drachms of silver." "The Prophet promptly thanked him for accusing him in this world instead of at the day of judgment and satisfied his demand." He read passages from the Koran preparing the minds of his hearers for his death, and exhorted them to peace among themselves and to live strictly according to the tenets of the faith.

In his last wanderings he only spoke of angels and heaven. He fainted with the violence of pain. Recovering, he raised his eyes heavenward, and, with a steady look but faltering voice, uttered the last broken though articulate words, "Oh, God, . . . pardon my sins." Then, after a silence broken only by the sobbing of friends, "Yes, I come —" There was another suspension of speech, with shortness of breathing, when he continued the sentence, "among my fellow-citizens on high." Then he peacefully expired on a prayer-rug spread upon the floor, with his head in the lap of his wife Ayesha.

His death caused great excitement among the faithful, and Omar, who himself would not at first believe it, tried to persuade the people that Mohammed was still alive. Finally, Abu Beker spoke to the assembled multitude and made the fact of his death definite. "Whoever among you served Mohammed," he said, "let him know that Mohammed is dead; but he who

has served the God of Mohammed, let him continue in His service, for He is still alive and never dies."

Like in the case of Cæsar, we are unable also in Mohammed's case, because of his having left almost no direct heirs, to trace his disease in his offspring. The four sons and four daughters borne to him by Cadijah all died in childhood. Fatima, his only surviving child, whom he placed among the four perfect women, and the boy borne to him by his only concubine, the African, also died young. There is an intimation though, in Weil's Geschichte des Chalifen, that either Fatima or her children did inherit the malady of their "distinguished progenitor."

Yet, in spite of its founder, there was and is more or less intolerance among Mohammedans as there was and is among Christians and Jews. This intolerance will never cease until man becomes omniscient, or indifferent to religion altogether. But neither Jesus nor Mohammed taught intolerance. Yet if there had not been this feeling of belligerent antagonism among these three prominent religions, to mention them chronologically,— Judaism, Christianity, Islamism,— Lessing would have had no occasion to write "Nathan der Weise," nor the parable of "The Three Rings."

Instead of bigotry the Koran contains the following sentiments: "If the Lord had pleased, all who are in the earth would have believed together, and wilt thou force men to be believers? No man can believe but by permission of God, and He will pour out His indignation on those who will not understand."

A milder assertion this than that of the Hebrew,— "Vengeance is mine. I will repay, saith the Lord." Again the Koran says: "Let there be no forcing in religion. The right way has been made clearly apparent from the wrong." And again, "Fight in the way of God with them that fight with you, but be not the aggressor, for God loveth not aggressors. . . . If they give over, then practice no hostility except against the treacherous."

Instead of Mohammedanism's being propagated at the point of the sword, as Christianity often was, a contradiction may be found in the fact that it was after the Turks had conquered the Mohammedans that they adopted their religion. This would seem unique in the history of creeds that the conqueror should almost unanimously and immediately adopt the faith of the vanquished. It would be like the ancient Egyptians, subduing the Jews and then abandoning their idols for the God of Israel; or like Christendom's conquering China, and then giving up Christ and adopting ancestor worship and the tenets of Buddha, which would but be a compliment to the religion of the Flowery Kingdom, implying anything but a resort to arms to coerce it. Mohammed did not resort to arms until his religion was well under way, and then to a great extent for self-preservation.

He naturally gave offense to the keepers of the Caaba, to superintendents, and to makers of idols. Idol-making was as important an industry in Mecca during the time of Mohammed as it was in Ephesus

during the time of Paul, and it nearly ended the career of both. He gave offense also to the various people connected with fetish worship, whose living depended on the old methods of beliefs. In fact, like most reformers, Mohammed gave offense to everybody, for being a reformer, not only in Arabia but anywhere, is as unfortunate as being a bull in Spain or a wren in Ireland.

The growth of his creed in the few first years was very slow. At the end of three years of continuous talking with people, and quiet reasoning, he had but thirteen followers and at one crisis in his affairs but two,— an illiterate old man and a boy of sixteen. Yet, in spite of counsel to the contrary from friends and influential members of his own family, for all through his life he was highly esteemed by his intimates, he continued proclaiming that "there was but one God, and that we were the creatures of His hands."

He was conspired against, hated, despised, hunted from place to place, yet saved always as if by miracle. He never doubted but that God interposed in his behalf to save him from his enemies.

Once, concealed in a cave, over the mouth of which an industrious spider had "providentially" spun a web, his pursuers, caught, as it were, by the net set for insects, passed on. Again, while hidden in a cavern, into which a passing enemy was about to enter, his horse took fright and fled, carrying him far away. Thus "the Lord effected another escape." On another occasion, when forty sworn men had resolved to thrust

their daggers into his heart at the same time, "that the guilt of his death might be divided among them," a heroic follower, knowing of the conspiracy, risked his own life under the green quilt that covered Mohammed when he slept while he secured the Prophet's exit through an unguarded door. This was during the flight to Yathreb, now Medina. The whole of Islam dates its era from this flight,— hegira. It was then that for the first time the "Prince of Believers" took up arms and resolved "to defend himself like an Arab and a man." And for ten years a personally conducted conflict continued, until he had "utterly conquered and won over all his enemies and the greatest and most honorable men."

"Mohammed," meaning the predicted Messiah, was the titular name assumed by Halabi as the founder of the new faith, and ever since he has been known by his assumed name, "Mohammed."

El Amin, the safe man,— his nickname in youth,— for the Arabs are as much given to soubriquets as the Italians, intimates the estimate in which he was held by those who knew him best. And the West, too, perhaps, instead of looking upon him as a freakish Oriental voluptuary, part knave and part madman, might have regarded him as interesting and as capable as Cæsar, if Arabic, instead of Latin, had been a part of college curricula.

Imperfect understanding is the cause of much of the misconception and evil of the world. It would seem to prefer the false to the true, the mediocre to the great,

and through incapacity and ill-nature misinterprets life and character.

By those disposed to a new justice Mohammed was said to be a fanatical visionary with more egotism than sense. He had his visions —" Where there is no vision the people perish," the Bible says,— but they were on the whole righteous and exalted.

As long as he lived contentedly with the wife of his heart, which he did until her death, he was *in every way* an example to his people. After her death he fell into the vices he condemned in others, and exhibited the weakness of the man. Yet, judging from almost immediate results, he was one of the greatest men who ever lived.

He was said by a contemporary to be " amiable, witty, affable, eloquent, and abundant in flowing poetic thought, and one of the purest men that ever lived." And since they were addicted, both he and his successors, to attaining greatness and holding it in high esteem, the reader may imagine the force with which they subsequently resented the insult and the threat of the Crusaders,— the greatest scoundrels themselves that ever scuttled a ship or cut a throat,— " to rescue the royal city from *defiled infidel possession.*"

Think of what the medieval church, with a few exceptions, was then and at subsequent times! Then think of their proclaiming a resolve to rescue a certain Mohammedan stronghold,— Jerusalem,— from *infidel,*—that is, Saracenic,— *defilement.* As if any defilement could be worse than their own then and since.

See "The Life of Bernard of Clairvaux" and "Hildebrand the Great," that twelfth century Spartan,— afterward known as Pope Gregory VII.,— in order to understand something of the baseness of Christianity in the Middle Ages.

It has been said that he pretended illiteracy in order to raise in the popular estimation the idea that the grace of diction of the Koran was a miracle.

This, however, although but a puerility of the enemy, was not necessary to explain the production of the book, since his ability to dictate elegant poetic Arabic, independent of being able to write it, might easily be due to the fact that in Arabia, just as it had been in Greece, perfection of language was of more importance than even refinement of manners, and that the Arabic tongue was so profuse even in synonyms in his day that it could furnish "four score names for honey, two hundred for a serpent, five hundred equivalents for a lion, and one thousand for a sword." This was at a time, too, when such a copiously variegated vocabulary was trusted to the memory alone of an illiterate and myriad people.

A fact further showing how skillful his countrymen must have been in the use of words is that from time immemorial poetry, eloquence, and felicities of speech were held in high esteem in Arabia, and led among them to positions of distinction both in private and public life.

These were the people that the Crusaders said defiled Jerusalem by possessing it.

CHAPTER XXI

Polygamy is the feet of clay in the religion of Mohammed. Yet the permission to have a limited number of wives,— according to the prophet, "not to exceed three, but best one,"— was morally better than anything except Christianity that had yet been permitted by former civilizations. And it was much better than that practiced in connection with the only Christianity that Mohammed knew anything about.

To know what the founder of Islamism achieved in the way of improved morals even by this, the weakest part of his system, before his followers had subsided again, as we are told, into something of their original depravity, it is necessary to know the conditions in such matters that prevailed in his country and the rest of the world before and when he began his reform. It is also necessary to know the ethical status of the more civilized people subsequently.

In all Arabia and Syria, and in the immediate countries into which Mohammed's triumphs extended, *unlimited* polygamy and "promiscuity" prevailed among men, and polyandry among women. The latter condition Cæsar found also in Britain during the Roman invasion, and it existed afterward.

One woman would have all the brothers of a family as husbands, the eldest being chief. This was commended, too, by the wisdom of the day as a matter of prudent national polity, calculated to prevent subsequent family feuds about the division of estates.

Among the Kandians and other ancient people polyandryism prevailed to such an extent that a matron of high caste would "sometimes be the wife of eight brothers." Not only this, but there were also *associated* husbands permitted, who had no claim to the property of the wife or of the family. This and worse was the popular matrimonial mode in the Arabian fatherland before the advent of Mohammed.

The Egyptians, the people of Asia Minor, and the early Persians were noted for a moral laxity unspeakable. Those among them who missed being influenced by Mohammed's reformation have remained so still, unless they have been converted by Christian missionaries.

Among the civilizations that antedated Moslemism that of the land of the Pharaohs is the most remote; and the rites of its favorite god and goddess, Iris and Osiris, to mention no others, reveal a state of moral depravity demanding the concealment of a foreign tongue.

In Babylon, according to Herodotus, "every woman was *obliged* to commit immorality at least once," in the temple of the Chaldean Venus, whose name was Mylitta. Groves were planted, as we also learn from Scripture, around all pagan temples to facilitate the

practice of vice, or "rites," as they were called, which constituted the chief part of worship, and the "worshipers," according to the prevalent conception of religion, contributed the proceeds of their depravity to the support of the priest and the temple. See Strabo; also the article on "Polyandry" in the Encyclopædia Britannica.

In Chaldea it was, if possible, worse; and in the time of Alexander the Great, as shown by any of the contemporary historians, "Babylonian banquets" were scenes of unheard-of excess. Yet, they were participated in by the highest families, mothers, fathers, daughters, and sons taking part together in performances unfit to mention.

In most parts of Greece licentiousness was religion, and many of their finest temples exhibited scenes of infamy that were perpetrated ostentatiously rather than in concealment, like the "hypocrites," in the days of our Lord, "who prayed on street corners that they might be seen of men." The lowest men in the Prophet's army were pillared saints of continence as compared with many of the best men of Greece, where morality, as we know it, was unknown.

The French artist Gerome's picture, entitled "At the House of Aspasia,"— a celebrated courtesan, as the world knows,— shows the leading men of Athens, including the "divine" Socrates, associating familiarly with salable women. This indicates how morally obtuse the otherwise keen-witted Greeks were. The leading women of Greece, with a very few exceptions, were

all purchasable. Instead of being condemned for their lack of morality they were highly esteemed, temples were erected in their honor, and frequently they received the freedom of cities and sat on the thrones with rulers, whose wives occupied a subordinate place.

Solon, the lawgiver, erected in the vicinity of his own home, as an act of piety, a place of worship of one of the vilest Venuses,— for every particular vice had its own particular Venus,— and he decorated it with lewd statuary. This was done as an act of devotion, just as we erect a library, a church, or a fountain, or endow a bed in a hospital. The responsible polygamy of Islam, where men had to house comfortably and protect their wives and children, was an advance over the " religious " immorality of Greece.

Mohammed's restriction as to the number of wives would have been laughed out of court as the puritanism of a cold-blooded bigot by the intellectual people of that Greece to whom we are indebted for much that is great in our civilization.

Some of the statuary and many of the pictures that ornamented the homes of her aristocracy, which were fortunately destroyed by the pious iconoclasts of subsequent periods, were lewd enough to cover with shame and confusion to-day a South Sea Islander. Yet " devout " Greeks not only delighted in them but burnt incense and performed libidinous rites in their presence, and supplicated them as gods.

Even in classic literature seductive descriptions of

scenes of all sorts of unchastity constitute one of the greatest dangers to the young student of such writers, because they are told without a blush by masters in the use of language and are pictured with every refinement and abnormality of vice. Our usually euphemistic and expurgated translations of Greek writers give the English reader no idea of the depravity of that æsthetic and cultured people.

In pagan Rome the state of morals, even among the patricians from the emperor down, Marcus Aurelius being a conspicuous exception, during many periods was so unspeakable that the poets who described their manners and customs,— Tibullus, Ovid, Propertius, Catullus, Martial, and even Horace,—"the gentleman's poet," as Matthew Arnold calls him,— can hardly be literally translated into modern tongues without exciting protesting gooseflesh. Indeed, the very language of Rome had become so eloquently obscene in describing the social life of the people that it was not until four hundred years after Christ that of St. Augustine it was said that one of his great achievements was that he "converted the Latin language to Christianity."

Not only such moral monsters as Caligula, Nero, and others, but better men, such as even the Emperor Augustus, patron of letters and of learned men, who gave his name to his age, were "beasts abandoned without shame to the vilest practices." So riotous was vice in that Rome whose civilization after Greece has most influenced subsequent ages that it was found

necessary to compel by legal enactment all evil women to " dye their hair blue or yellow "— the origin, perhaps, of " the bleached blonde "— to distinguish them from the comparatively respectable.

Even during the " righteous reign " of " the good Emperor Trajan," in the first years of the Christian era, there were known to be thirty-two thousand of these dyed, literally stained women, vultures, corruptors of youth, in the imperial city alone. Besides there were numbers not registered, protected by law, and contributing by their license fee to the support of the state. So much was the army in need of soldiers that if women at eighteen years of age, married or single, had not given birth to at least one child, they were compelled to pay a fine.

In this same metropolis, previous to Mohammed, there were thousands of these " hypocrites of passion," as Milton calls such characters. Among the Islamites, when they numbered millions and millions, you could not find fifty abandoned women. Such persons were in danger any minute of being " sewed up in sacks, with a viper and a monkey, and cast into the sea," this being the Mussulman's punishment for " incorrigible immorality, to be put into execution after the third offense."

Not only the social life of pagan Rome, but the art of it too was appalling. Pictures illustrating every variety of depravity embellished the walls of the homes of the best people. They were painted by great artists, so that, as Propertius writes, " on account of familiar-

ity with pictured infamy, from infancy the children in any family were not allowed to remain novices in vice."

We may imagine, if so inclined, what must have been the morals of a people who esteemed the Grobian Martial a great poet, admitting him into their homes. Even women of the household, like women in Italy later in the Christian era during the days of Boccaccio, delighted in his pruriencies. In Greece even the artist Phidias took young girls into his home to teach them the arts of the courtesan, and that, too, without his losing caste in "high society."

The first Christians of Rome gladly suffered death rather than participate in her infamies. If there were nothing else to testify to this moral exaltation, the catacombs prove it. But there was subsequent declension at various periods from the standard of Christ, when the church became merely a politico-religious institution, as was illustrated during the time of such characters as Pope John XXII., Sixtus IV., or Alexander VI. The system that could elevate such monsters to such lofty positions must have been, as has been said, "rotten to the core," and necessarily gave rein to even worse practices than those that Mohammed succeeded in limiting when he found that he could not abolish them.

Even the comparative superiority of Leo X., or of Clement VII., consisted in the absence of the grossest vices, rather than in the presence of Christian virtues. You can hardly help but be convinced,— despite the

pure and heroic lives of its martyrs,— of the moral superiority of the masses in general, who in the early centuries of Mohammedanism during the reign of the glorious Fatimic Caliphs lived under the limited polygamy that his religion permitted.

" The indulgences, criminal to us," says Carlyle, " which the prophet permitted were not of his appointment. He found them practiced unquestioned from time immemorial in Arabia. What he did was to curtail them, restrict them, not on one but many sides."

His taking up of burdensome ablutions, protracted fastings, frequently repeated prayers, incessant almsgiving to the less fortunate, his never demanding small or great tithes or emoluments for religious sustentation, besides his making essential to the faith the practice of " the Christian virtues," plurality of wives being excepted, shows that his purpose, at least, was not self-indulgence. His religion did not succeed because of its being easy, and it was not, as was said by his enemies, " the gross result of the teachings of a sensual epileptic maniac." The many unclean things read by vulgar minds into the word " Harem," a word signifying " holy place," that is, the place set apart in Oriental homes for women and children, are without foundation. He is not responsible for the changes made in the creed and practice of Islam by the conquering Turks any more than the Christianity of the primitive church is responsible for the superimposed elaborations of subsequent sacerdotalism.

Of Judaism, exalted as it is above all other re-

ligions, except Christianity,— to which it is related as father to son,— at least two of the kings, David and Solomon, had a greater number of wives without condemnatory criticism than any of the Mohammedan rulers had, even in their decline. And we know, too, according to the Old Testament, that protected prostitution, though never permitted by Islamism, was common among the Hebrews at least two thousand years before Christianity tried to abolish it, and Islam almost succeeded in doing so.

The women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the Congregation, mentioned in First Samuel, with whom Eli's sons disgraced themselves and thus brought shame to their father, were professional social pariahs, and were known as such. This was something that could not have existed in the early centuries of Mohammedanism.

" The strange woman whose lips drop as an honeycomb, and whose mouth is smooth as oil, but her end is bitter as wormwood and sharp as a two-edged sword," whom Solomon in Proverbs — and he ought to have known — advises men to avoid, " remove thy way from her and come not near the door of her house," was of Mrs. Warren's profession. Even in those ancient days she was a familiar type and had her own well-established home.

" The haughty daughters of Zion," of the Prophet Isaiah, " who walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet," are " fashionables "

of the same class, delineated by the pen of a keen observer.

What is "the song of songs which is Solomon's" but an erotic poem, having to do with the daintily cultivated lust of the Orient, decorated with bucolic tropes and metaphors and flowers of speech, after the manner of the literary artist that Solomon was, and meant merely as a picture of sumptuous voluptuousness. Such compositions are common among the people of the Orient still, and this one in particular is simply a convincing illustration of the one hundred and one accomplishments, literary and otherwise, for which the erring son of David, the Oriental Henry VIII., but less bloodthirsty, was celebrated. Solomon, however, did not have to kill his wives before the church would permit him to marry others.

Moses himself took an Ethiopian concubine, and Jephthah, a chief of Israel especially honored by St. Paul, without in any way suffering compromise, or without there being any necessity for silence about it, was known to be the son of a professional harlot.

Joshua's spies slept openly in the house of the chronic adulteress Rahab. Samson chose the home of an abandoned woman to be his retreat in Geza, and his close familiarity with another,— Delilah,— had to do with his tragedy. The disgrace of Samson, according to the morality of the times, was because of the women's being *foreigners* rather than because of their being courtesans.

In Christian lands, during as late as the eleventh,

twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, immorality prevailed to such an extent among kings and people that many of the great works of Gothic architecture dating from this period were as profusely adorned with lewd sculptures as Solomon's songs were with lewd metaphors. Their subjects were taken from the lives of the religious orders as Solomon's more justifiably were taken from pastoral life.

" These obscene works of art formerly encumbered the doors, windows, arches, and niches of many of the finest Gothic cathedrals of France." Modesty has lately insisted on their removal, but the works themselves have been rescued from destruction by the zeal of antiquarians and may be seen now only inside the locked doors of museums. It is said, though, that where the spirit of the Reformation has not penetrated some of these pornorific specimens of mediæval Christian art have escaped the iconoclastic hand of modern fastidiousness and may still be seen defying decency on their original foundations. They have been photographed and have also been reproduced by the art of the engraver.

When such was the state of morals, when such was the depravity of religious teachers, and when there was such recognition of that depravity that it was carved into elaborate works of art and set up as decorations in the most conspicuous parts of places of " Christian " worship, it would hardly be reasonable to expect purity of private life at the same time, or from the same people.

In Rome in the eleventh century, it is recorded, a conspicuous brothel and a church stood side by side. Five hundred years afterward, instead of such evils, having been diminished by the celibacy of the clergy and the recognition of the sacredness of chastity, the social evil had attained such enormous proportions that numerous statutes were enacted that were calculated rather to foster than to abolish it. Many precautions were taken for the same purpose, indicating the barbarous crudeness as well as cruelty of the period.

For example, "one convicted of selling a girl to infamy,"—a common practice,—"was heavily fined, and if he did not pay within ten days he had one foot cut off." Of course he paid and the state was the richer. Tortures, floggings, brandings with red-hot iron, banishments, were inflicted on some to terrorize others, and every such exhibition increased the revenue.

Relating to the cruelty and disregard for life in the days of the supremacy of the Christian church, a twelfth century writer says: "In our town much pillage and murder were done by day and night. Hardly a day passed but someone was killed." Another Italian historian of the same period says, "Treasons, assassinations, tortures, open debauchery, the practice of poisoning, the worst and most shameful outrages, are unblushingly and publicly tolerated in the open light of heaven." Another relates that Cæsar Borgia, one of the three illegitimate children of Pope Alexander VI, one day killed Peroso, "the Pope's favorite,

between his arms and his cloak, so that the blood spurted up to the pope's face, without even the farce of a trial for manslaughter." "Hippolyte d'Este had his brother's eyes put out in his presence. No punishment was inflicted by law." See Taine's "History of English Literature," article on "Christian Renaissance."

A Roman fisherman was asked why he had not informed the government that he had seen a body thrown into the Tiber. He replied that he had seen about a hundred bodies thrown into the river at the same place and that "no one had ever troubled himself about it."

Some further idea of the declension in morals from the standard of the primitive Christian church may be indicated by that extraordinary act of legislation on the subject, the bull of Pope Clement II, who in the eleventh century desired "to endow the churches with the surplus gain of brothels."

The early fathers imposed severe penances on sensual sins. The more thrifty Clement would use the proceeds of such wickedness for the enrichment, as he said, "of the holy institution founded by God." Consequently everybody profiting by the social evil as a gilded road to opulence, when disposing of his or her property either at death or during life, was forced to assign a half of it to a convent.

Thus we see that not among the followers of the false prophet, but in Christian lands and during the ages of unbounded faith the people inheriting the best code of ethics ever formulated were as notorious for cruelty,

cupidity, and sensual sin as they were celebrated for art and eccentric piety. See "Corpus Historicum Medii Veri," G. Eccard, Vol. II; Diarium, of John Buchardi, High Chamberlain to Pope Alexander VI, p. 2134; Guicciardini's Del Historia d'Italia, p. 211; also "Cassinova's Memoirs," and Scipione Rossi's "Memoirs of the Convents of Tuscany at the Close of the Eighteenth Century"; also section on "The Christian Renaissance," in Taine's "History of English Literature."

Dante, that grim Puritan of the Middle Ages,— with apologies to the descendants of the better Puritans here,— in the nineteenth canto of the "Inferno" in a perfervid flight compares even the proclaimed seat and center of morality, the papal court, "to Babylon, the mother of harlots." On visiting hell, he finds Pope Nicholas III there, waiting the arrival of Boniface, who again is to be succeeded by Clement.

Even Rome, despite her martial spirit and supremacy in culture, had become a school of vice and iniquity, and had abandoned itself to a saturnalia of wickedness — see "Pornocracy"— perhaps unparalleled in history. Yet evidences of a pure morality might have been found in the remote past, even among the heathen, in men of such noble natures as Tacitus, Pliny the Younger, Papelius, Fabianus, and others. Then there was the semi-divine Seneca, that "seeker after God," as Canon Farrar calls him. When Nero ordered him to commit suicide his heroic and virtuous wife insisted on bleeding herself to death with him rather than survive without him. And there were other women of

like soul, such as the "Chaste Octavia," the daughter of Claudius, who, although the wife of Nero, remained upright in the midst of depravity, and who was slain in her twenty-second year "without having known a single joy," and in the fidelity with which the vestals observed their vows. The high character, too, sustained by such women as the mother of the Gracchi shows that, despite the Grobian deities, in all lands, under all creeds, and subject to every contaminating environment, virtue has had her witnesses. No one race nor belief has a monopoly of purity, since the earth has never been, as Matthew Arnold has said, without at least "a remnant making for righteousness." This is peculiar to no particular belief, but is a characteristic of humanity.

During the first few centuries of Christian Rome the struggle of early believers against pagan iniquities presents an imposing history. They suffered death and worse, as the catacombs and the Coliseum testify, rather than renounce conviction or bow the knee to iniquity. Everything that malice could invent or malignancy put into execution to lure them from purity was practiced in vain.

To paraphrase from St. Paul, through faith and self-denial they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight armies of aliens. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they

might receive a better resurrection. Others had trials of cruel mockery, scourgings, bonds, imprisonment. They were stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts, in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth, preferring anything to disloyalty to their Master.

Note the distinction. Instead of improving, like wine, with age, fourteen centuries afterward, in "the good city of Ulm," as in other Continental cities, the only *genuine* successors of the saints and martyrs through "the sanctifying bath of Christian baptism" licensed houses to facilitate the evil practices that their ancestors condemned.

In this same city of Ulm the lessees of these resorts "agreed to provide clean, healthy women" for the accommodation of their co-religionists, "and never less than fourteen." They bound themselves to a fixed dietary scale for the "inmates." "The daily meals were to be of the value of six-pence and on Monday every woman was to have two dishes, soup with meat and vegetables and a roast or boiled joint," and "on fast days and in Lent"— careful religious souls — "they were to have the same number of dishes, but eggs or fish instead of meat." This attention to mint and cumin, while disregarding the weightier matter of the moral law, was characteristic of the age.

A woman resided in every house to make money arrangements between the guests and the inmates, as in

pagan Pompeii centuries previous. Every Monday each woman had to contribute one penny and the hostess two-pence, "and for what, in the name of all the gods at once?" "To purchase tapers for the virgin and saints, to be offered in the cathedral on Sunday nights!"

In this same good city of Ulm, and in other cities of the Continent of Europe, "girls and women, with their own consent or with the consent of their parents or husbands, could be apprenticed to the women keepers, to learn the business." On Sundays, Lady's day, and during Passion Week, the houses were piously closed.

This surely was worse than anything that happened during the licentious days of Charles II or James II in England, or Louis XV in France, because it had the sanction and protection of deliberate law, while the other had only to do with individual profligacy. See Jäger's "Schwabischen Städtwesen des Mittelalters."

In Italy licentiousness was more likely to be associated with crimes of blood. "Murders at funerals because of inheritances," "lying in ambush even in the churches to execute vengeance on antagonists," "lubricity everywhere, and every destructive phase developed into an art and practiced without shame," "blasphemy the most frightful with impunity were common as compared with Mohammedanism, where blasphemy was a capital offense," "revenge the most atrocious." These are the phrases of eye-witnesses, and are said to be "weak compared with the facts."

Lucretia Borgia, the pope's abandoned but brilliant daughter, killed her brother, with whom she had been living in incest. Cæsar Borgia, the pope's atrocious son, at the capture of Capua chose forty of the most beautiful women, whom he kept for himself. The others he sold in Rome at accommodating prices.

In 1347, when, on account of the schism of the popes the removal of the seat of papal government from Rome to Avignon was contemplated, Machiavelli predicted, " If the papal court were removed to Switzerland, that simplest and most religious people would in an incredibly short time become utterly depraved by the vicious example of the Italian priesthood." See Discorsi I, 12. William Roscoe, the historian of " Italian Life and Letters," a man not at all hypercritical of morality, says that even in *writing* obscenity the Italian clergy excel all people. See Appendix to " Life of Leo X." And he said this despite the fact that he was acquainted with the writings of Swift and Sterne, two malodorous clergymen of the English church, and with the vile dramatic writers of the Restoration.

No English words, it has been said, can picture the moral monstrosities calmly narrated in the pages of Patronius and Martial. Yet Petrarch, who knew these classic writers and what they stood for in the life of the people, declares that " the Rome of his day outrivaled in depravity pagan Rome at its worst."

In fulfillment of the prediction of Machiavelli about what would happen in Avignon in case it should become the seat of the papal court, in 1347 brothels were

established in that beautiful city contemporaneous with that event by the "Good" Queen Jane, and certain laws were laid down for their management, which, somewhat modified, are in vogue in France still. For example, "the women in these establishments were limited in their walks, and were obliged to wear on their shoulders a red knot, by means of which they could be readily known." We may imagine what the good women must have been when the bad ones needed a decoration to distinguish them.

Henry Smith's "Surgery," Vol. I, p. 297, quoting, says:

"Our good queen doth further order that a brothel shall be located near the Convent of the Augustine Friars, and that no youth shall be admitted therein without permission first obtained from the abbess or governor, who is to keep the keys and counsel and advise them — the clients — not to make a noise, nor to frighten the wenches, which if they disobey, they shall be laid under confinement by the beadle."

Still another regulation showing how exclusively Christian these institutions were, declares that "no Jew shall be allowed to enter the brothel under any pretense." So careful was the "Good Queen Jane" of the souls of the inmates, so piously anxious was she to guard them, especially against Israelitish and, as we shall see later on, venereal contamination. Other rules declare that "the doors shall be closed on Sundays and on all saints' days, and that once a week the wenches shall be examined by the abbess in company

with a barber surgeon appointed by the directors, and those that are diseased shall be separated from the rest, lest the youth shall catch the distemper." Could anything be more tenderly maternal?

The above ordinances seem to have been in full force in Avignon during nearly the whole period of occupancy by the popes. Yet, according to Petrarch and other Italian writers, "the city was none the less the home of debauchery and a scandal to Christendom."

To understand the depravity of the Christian world until and for some time after the Reformation, with here and there fine types of piety which were perhaps at times thought a trifle extravagant and eccentric, the reader is referred to the articles on "Knights of the Temple," "Crusaders," "Knights of Malta," "Flagellant," and "Pornocracy," in any impartial book of reference.

So depraved were the people previous to that spiritual awakening known as the great Reformation that it was hardly thought possible for men or women to live virtuous lives except in a convent or under a cowl. This protection was supposed to be a stimulant to social morality, hence the great increase in the number of such institutions, which subsequently became so corrupt themselves that outraged decency demanded their suppression. Not only man's depravity but woman's also, even under the surveillance of an untrammeled church, is shown in contemporary art and literature.

"Le Romaunt de la Rose," the most popular book

of the thirteenth century, exhibits women as always giving way to the vilest lusts under the slightest temptation. That was the popular view of women then, and whether true or not — we do not believe it was ever true — equally reveals the corruption of the then masculine mind. To be chivalrous was not a matter of course as now. Men adopted chivalry as a profession, in order to protect women from insult and injustice and pilgrims from robbers.

In this same book all men were shown to be seducers and in every way pernicious. The matter of course continence of the "just a gentleman" to-day was proclaimed as something supernatural then, entitling a man to distinction. So lax was marital morality that many of the most distinguished people were born outside of wedlock, and being the father of "natural" children did not ostracise a man from the best society, but added rather to his popularity. Immorality that would now cause international scandal was a matter of common occurrence, regarded with placid indifference and complacency, except when it interfered with inheritances. The popularity of Rabelais, with his filth and loathsomeness, the favorite reading matter, even of high churchmen, gives an idea of the gross manners of the day — see the introduction to any standard edition of Rabelais — and the "Decameron," the "Memoirs of Benvenuto Cellini," and many other publications reflecting the spirit of the age, including "La Morte d'Arthur," reveals a state of private and public impudicity that is appalling.

Spain, Portugal, and France each require chapters to do them justice in this particular.

As in Rome so in Spain the purest people were the Mohammedan conquerors. According to the Code of Alphonso IX in the twelfth century, so prevalent was the social evil that laws were put into force not to abolish, but to protect it and make it yield a handsome revenue.

The various sorts of violators of the moral law were officially classified as "men who traffic in debauchery," "brothel keepers," "husbands conniving at the dishonor of their wives," "ruffiani," that is, men who were supported by abandoned women, and the like. And to show how religiously conducted were these protected resorts — for the Spaniard is nothing if not "religious"— placards hung in various places in the houses accommodatingly announcing that they would be "closed on Sundays, on holidays during Lent, ember week, and all fast days, under punishment of one hundred stripes to each woman who received visitors." Men, it would seem, went scot free. They made the laws.

The condition that horrified our people a few years ago in Bernard Shaw's "Mrs. Warren's Profession" was but a feeble survival, or revival, of what was universally rampant in the good old days and regarded as a part of vigorous life, where restraint was considered weakness and indulgence strength. It was a state of traffic common to princes, royalty, and even at times the church, as we have seen, in the ages of faith.

To select but one example from the loathsome annals of the times, the profits and emoluments of the brothels of Seville, the city proudly boasting the largest and most opulently ornate cathedrals of the world, " were assigned to Alonzo Ajardo, master of the table of the most orthodox king." Thus the supreme ruler of a Christian nation and his *honored* guests, without protest or slander, luxuriously fed from the proceeds of licensed debauchery.

We might continue citations from the social life of the past, showing that other civilizations were at least as lax as, if not worse than, slander declared Mohammedanism to be, in order to defend Mohammed from the charge of being a demoralizing epileptic, who first deluded and then allured followers by promises of forbidden pleasures. But this to-day is hardly necessary. Since we cannot condemn the religion of Christ because of the immorality of some of its professors, nor because of its failure to reform the multitude even under the leadership of noble spirits, neither can we condemn Mohammed, the magnanimous, for what was done by some of his successors nor by what *we read* into Islamism.

The polygamy permitted by Mussulman faith was also permitted by Judaism. Monogamy with the Jews is but a matter of expediency, a merely economic evolution. Polygamy, uncondemned by the Old Testament, was rather due to the exigencies of the times than to either sensuality or epilepsy on the part of its founder. And the absence of progress in the life of Islam, in-

stead of being due, as has been said, to license in matrimony, is due rather to other causes.

It has been said that "Islam is merely a religion of obscurantism, bringing in its train the stagnation of nations, and hampering them in that march to the unknown which we call progress." But such an attitude shows not only an absolute ignorance of the teachings of the Prophet, but a blind forgetfulness of the evidence of history. The Islam of the earlier centuries evolved and progressed with the nations, and the stimulus it gave to men in the reign of the ancient Caliphs is beyond question. To impute to it the present decadence of the Moslem world is altogether too puerile. The truth is that nations have their day, and to a period of glorious splendor succeeds a time of lassitude and slumber. It is a law of nature. And then some day some danger threatens them, stirs them from their torpor, and they awake. See Pierre Loti's "Egypt à Centre." Or again, may it not be that the absence of progress in material things among the followers of the Prophet is due rather to the fact that the flower of her young men, nearly ten thousand annually gathered from all her dominions, devote the best years of their lives to the almost exclusive study of a mostly impossible book,— the Koran. Of course they make a shy at modern science, thus confining their minds within a circle, and they end in fatalism, passivity, and profound faith, so that as missionaries they may subsequently carry peace and immobility to more than three hundred million of men. It is because of

this absorption in an alluring book, surrounded as it is with centuries of sacred traditions, and not because of that impracticable thing polygamy that Mohammedanism is eliminating from its life anyhow, that "Islam keeps its cohesion." Through this, too, it loses material power.

In visiting the El-Azhar in Cairo lately, a Muslim university that was old when other seats of learning such as Oxford were in their infancy, we were profoundly impressed with the multitudes of serious men in turbans, the prince in common with the son of the laborer, seated in innumerable groups literally at the feet of self-obliterating teachers, studying a volume having chiefly to do with worship, almsgiving, self-abnegation, prayer, the nature and the essence of "Allah the all compassionate," in their eyes the mystic light of other days, all preoccupied with the self-same dream. "It is not difficult to understand how the spectacle of our troubles, our despairs, our miseries, in these new ways in which our lot is cast, should make them reflect and turn again to the tranquil dreams of their ancestors" and the mysteries of their unchangeable faith, the same to-day as it was when Bagdad was the Athens of the new creed.

LORD BYRON

TO

THE MEMORY OF

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

Sympathetic as a critic, generous
as a friend

LORD BYRON

This also shows the *Facies Epilepticus* (the Epileptic face) that cannot always be described but is so evident to the expert.

Facing p. 190.

LORD BYRON

CHAPTER XXII

UNLIKE Cæsar and Mohammed, Byron's epilepsy was at first psychic, perhaps only emotional, *petit,* but in time it developed into *grand mal,* responding by convulsions,— clonic and tonic spasms,— to certain sensations or impressions. Such, it would seem, was the attack he had upon seeing the tragedian Edmund Keene act the character of Sir Giles Overreach in Massinger's "A New Way to Pay Old Debts."

It was a first night after prolonged preparation. The house was filled with the élite of London. Every branch of polite and elegant society was present; literature, art, and fashion occupied the boxes, and crowded the chief seats. Preliminary announcements had filled the public mind with great expectations. The time at last came, the orchestra subsided into silence, the curtain rose, the drama began. So intense was the suspense of the audience during its progress, so dreadful was the realism of the actor in his characterization of the irascible and turbulent Sir Giles, that many of his auditors were violently affected by it. The Duke of Wellington fainted. Leigh Hunt, "an old stager," who was there in the capacity of dramatic critic, was completely overcome. Many prominent persons went

into hysterics, and Lord Byron "had an attack of his epilepsy" and was carried out of the house in spasms.

That the "noble lord" was not born with a silver spoon, or rather with a "rosebud in his mouth, and a nightingale singing in his ear," as Rogers said of a brother bard, is very evident, for he differed from Cæsar and Mohammed inasmuch as he came of neurotic stock. His mother had "nerves" and a shrill voice, an unpardonable thing in woman, and she did not belong to "The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children." When irritated by the pranks of her erratic offspring, her favorite weapon was a poker. When she could not strike her darling with it while holding it in her hand, she made it fly after him like a hawk after a swallow. She "was subject, too, to hurricane bursts of temper," and she frequently taunted her son with his lameness. She believed in fortune-telling, palmistry, and presentiments, was subject to violent attacks of frenzy, and was so easily affected because of an otherwise irritable nervous system that she also while a girl, on seeing in Edinburgh Mrs. Siddons in the character of Isabella, was so impressed that she went into convulsions and came near causing a panic in the house. She was the sort of woman that might have been benefited by Christian Science or any of the "Faith Cures," since she did not seem always to have control of herself and believed too implicitly in the omnipotence of drugs.

Of Byron's daughter Ada, who afterward became the Duchess of Lovelace and a most charming and

estimable woman, in one of his "Conversations with Captain Medwyn," he said that "her childhood alternated between irritability and spasm." So that we have here what we might venture to call hereditary epilepsy, with the disease appearing in three generations.

Byron, too, was emotional at times to the point of insanity. He was melancholic, his life alternating between the extremes of joy and sadness; given to refinements of love and hate; a man of morbid acuteness of feeling, going to extremes in everything, susceptible, easily excited, the victim of unreasonable prejudice, devoted to friends constantly, disliking enemies only spasmodically, and even then doing them anonymous beneficences. On one occasion, during mutual outbursts of temper, he and his mother had gone to the neighboring apothecary, each to request him not to sell poison to the other. He was so sensitive that the sight of Sir Walter Scott's handwriting put him in high spirit for the day. Shelley's disapprobation of one of his great poems caused him to throw it into the fire, to the horror of his friend. He had another copy, though, in reserve, which, to the surprise of his unsophisticated admirer, he published a few months afterward.

Such harlequinadery at times suited his temper. One of his fancies was that it was difficult to love a woman after you had seen her eat. He objected to Chaucer's poetry because "it was immoral," thought Fielding's "Tom Jones" the greatest novel ever written,

and considered the poetry of the Koran greater than that of any European poet. He was the original discoverer, or inventor, of "Christian Science," although never before getting credit for it. "I once thought myself a philosopher," he said to Medwyn, "talked nonsense with great decorum about the non-existence of pain, considered all sickness a matter of imagination. A fall from a horse cured me."

He took strange pride in his errors, paraded them forth in the most conspicuous light, and, as Moore said, "He could make one single indiscretion go farther than a thousand would in others." As Matthew Arnold asserted of Goethe, "He neither made man too much a God nor God to much a man." Yet he thought enough of women to fall in love with many of them.

Like Cæsar he had mahogany hair except that he had more of it, and it curled — this is important, as having to do with some of his compromises. Locks of it being found in the card-cases of fashionable women in the estimation of the wicked world "discovered" him. He was mortally afraid of disease, but, unlike the present people of America, *he* wanted to get consumption, because, as he remarked, "It lasted so long, and women would then say, 'Poor Byron, how pale and interesting he looks in dying.'"

He had no admiration for antiquities nor art, nor beautiful things generally, except as matters of display or to emphasize his own importance. But he described scenery magnificently, without apparently observing it. This was perhaps the unconsciousness of

genius; unlike Matthew Arnold, who everlastingly admired scenery, but never described it.

Lady Blessington observed Byron with sympathetic accuracy. Her "Conversations with Lord Byron" are slanderously said to be on a par with Landor's "Imaginary Conversations"; nevertheless they are trustworthy enough to quote. They are so interesting and well expressed that if not true they ought to be; besides, they reveal a charming pensonality in the lady herself. The reader will find an interesting description of an evening with Lady Blessington in N. P. Willis's too much neglected "Pencilings by the Way."

In her "Conversations" the countess asserts that the elegancies and comforts of refined life appear to have been as little understood by Byron as they were valued by him. He was ignorant, so said she, of what constituted elegancy and refinement. A bad and vulgar taste predominated in all his equipments, whether of dress or furniture. He lacked, according to this same authority, delicacy of mind, and had, in spite of his proclamations of democracy, the most decided taste for aristocracy of any person she ever knew. But his "natural flippancy" of character took off all appearance of premeditation, or bitterness from his remarks, even when they were most acrimonious. He had very bad taste in dress, and his appearance on horseback, which he affected because of his lameness, as Montaigne did because of his diminutive height, was not prepossessing. The horses which he rode

were usually "covered with fantastic trappings in the way of cavezons, martingales, and heaven knows what else," she writes, "his saddles barbarically embroidered, and he was usually embarrassed while on horseback with large holsters in which he always carried loaded pistols, and which gave him a formidable appearance."

"His dress when in Italy," she tells us with feminine particularity, "was a nankeen jacket and trousers, shrunken from washing, the jacket embroidered in the same color as the fabric and ornamented with three rows of useless buttons down the front; a dark blue velvet cap with a shade and a gold band and a large gold tassel at the crown, a black stock, nankeen gaiters, and a pair of blue spectacles completed his costume. Sometimes this was ostentatiously changed for Scotch plaid. He was fond of the bizarre, not only in dress but in morals, religion, everything. On his first expedition to Greece he wore the tartan of the Gordon clan rather than the dress of an English gentleman." "He did not ride well," says this same Boswell, "and was also an exceedingly timid horseman."

What barbarity of taste and lack of skill in horsemanship as contrasted with that of his colleagues in similarity of malady, Cæsar and Mohammed, although Mohammed's favorite charger was a white mule, just as the poet Schiller's was an ass. Yet, unlike Cæsar, there was nothing effeminate about Byron but his voice.

He was more proud of his rank than Congreve was

of his reputation as a man of fashion, not "the pride of the ancient aristocrat, though, but rather the ostentatious pride or conscious vanity of the plebeian recently ennobled." "I never met anyone with such a decided taste for the aristocracy as Lord Byron," says this same historian, "and this is shown in a thousand ways. He was also incapable of keeping a secret involving either his own or any other person's honor; yet his indiscretion and incontinence of speech were not due to malice, it would seem, but to lack of that inborn refinement, indicating nature's gentleman, that certain persons possess as a divine endowment, independent of birth or training." At another time that same lady observer writes of him, "His whole appearance is remarkably gentlemanlike, and he owed nothing of this to his toilet, as his coat appeared to have been many years made and much too large, and all his garments convey the idea of having been purchased ready-made, so ill do they fit him.

"There is a *gaucherie* in his movements which evidently proceeds from the perpetual consciousness of his lameness that appears to haunt him, for he tries to conceal his foot when seated and when walking has a nervous rapidity in his manner. He is very slightly lame, and the deformity of his foot is so little remarkable that I am not aware which foot it is. Were I to point out the prominent defect of Lord Byron I should say it was flippancy, and a total want of that natural self-possession and dignity which ought to characterize a man of birth and education."

I am particular about giving these details as observed by his most intimate acquaintances, just to show that notwithstanding his epilepsy his eccentricities and peculiarities were not necessarily due to that malady.

Of Roman and Greek art — excavating in Greece and Rome were in vogue in his day and the " Elgin Marbles " had created a furore of artistic attention by this time — he said he thought too little of specimens of either even to steal them, let alone to buy or dig for them. In prospect of his return from Greece, while he bought marble busts for his friend Hobhouse, two or three skulls dug out of sarcophagi and a phial of Attic hemlock were all he thought worth bringing to England for himself. He had a *penchant* for skulls. The reader may remember his using one as a drinking vessel as a matter of braggadocio when he was a student at Oxford. Four of these gruesome ornaments decorated his apartment and his friend Dallas, as a matter of wonder, says that " their presence did not impress him morbidly."

Anything proceeding from friendship affected him to tears. When writing, he neither knew nor cared what was coming next. This seems incredible when you think of the wonderful beauty of his diction and versification and the polish of his " spontaneous " wit, as bright as if the result of deliberation. He wrote a fair round hand with great rapidity, and but seldom corrected a phrase. In writing he never recast anything. He said of his manner of composition, " I am

like the tiger; if I miss the first spring, I go grumbling back to my jungle." He was something like Mohammed in this, while we imagine Cæsar's terseness of luminous phraseology must have been the result of many erasures and infinite pains. Byron could stop in the midst of a composition to play billiards or engage in lengthy conversation and begin again where he left off, without hesitating or losing a word.

The memory of heroic deeds caused his face to flush, his eyes to glow, and exhibition of self-sacrifice inspired him with sublime emotions.

He was so humane that when in Italy he would hardly hurt the flea he found feeding upon him. Like Sterne's opening the door of the cage of the starling that "wanted to get out," he would open the door of his room to let the fly escape that had tormented him; yet from childhood, and like Mohammed when a man, firearms, swords, dirks, and stilettoes were his delight. Pointing a stiletto threateningly once at a shrinking friend, he said: "How I would like to know the sensation of having committed a murder!" Yet he was so personally kind to people and foolishly fond of animals that when in Italy he traveled from place to place with an ever increasing menagerie of the latter, among which were monkeys, pollywogs, bull-dogs, caterpillars, poodles like miniature muffs, cats, peacocks, hens,— not to eat,— parrots, horses, ponies, and other household gods, including doctors, whom he euphemistically paraphrased "medical companions," and whom he found, he said, "as obsequious as spaniels." He did

not like doctors, as a rule, and only believed in them as superstitious persons believe in ghosts, with fear and trembling. In consequence of his sympathy with the lower creation and spasmodic vegetarianism, although he was fond of fish and thought his partaking of fish as a food the reason of his being a good swimmer, he called angling "that solitary vice," and Ik Walton, its high priest, "a sentimental savage, who tenderly teaches his disciples how to sew up living frogs and break their legs, by way of experiment, and to run barbed hooks through the bodies of worms, as if he loved them." A couplet in allusion to Walton in "Don Juan" reads:

> "The quaint old cruel coxcomb in *his* gullet
> Should have a hook, and a small trout to pull it."

He concludes a denunciation of fishing by declaring, with his usual extravagance of emphasis, that "no good man could be an angler."

He affected, however, the more ferocious animals, such as lions, tigers, hyenas; and when in Oxford ensconced in his sumptuously furnished quarters a bear, which followed him in his lonely walks by day, and slept at the foot of his bed by night. While in Italy peacocks paraded through his parterres and trailed their Juno tails over his marble floors, and tame turkeys roosted on the carved backs of artistic settees and sofas, and chickens slept on the canopy of his bed and picked the flowers and fruit from his Gobelin tapestries.

When Tom Moore visited him in his palace in Venice, as they entered the dark circuitous corridor in the clouds of the night, he was soothed by such warnings, given dramatically, as "Look out for the bulldog!" "Be careful, or the monkey will fly on you!" "Don't lift your feet too high or you may tread on the cobra!" "Now mind the vampire!" until you would think his heart would have turned to stone, and his blood to mortar.

Yet so tender was Byron of his pets that on the slightest noise from them he left everything in order to see what was the matter. Like Launce with his dog "Crab," he was always taking their part and blaming himself for their faults. Another resemblance this to the Prophet of Arabia, except that Mohammed declined luxuriating thus in the lap of exuberance, preferring rather to live within the limitations of patriarchal simplicity.

So perfect a shot with a pistol was Byron that he could take the head off a chicken drinking at the trough or picking up food in the poultry yard when he wished to have fowl served for the dinner of a friend. Once he stuck a slender cane in the earth and split it in two with a bullet, at a distance of twenty paces.

"Well but weakly," he once wrote of himself; yet he was large, fat, awkward, flabby, weighed over two hundred and forty pounds, although he was only five feet nine inches high. When he came to London he reduced himself to one hundred and sixty pounds, and looked like an Adonis. He kept himself so ever

after by excessive exercise and fasting. For long stretches at a time he took no food but a little rice, twice daily, and drank nothing but vinegar and water. Yet he supplied the most sumptuous suppers for his friends. His chief amusements were boxing and swimming. In the latter, despite his lameness, he became an expert. In rivalry of Leander, as every one knows, because he told everybody, he swam across the Hellespont. This was such an important event in his life that in his letters from Italy to his mother he mentions it seven times. He also swam from Lida to Venice, up the grand canal to his palace steps, leaving all competitors behind him, being four hours and a half in the water without resting. And he did what was still a greater feat,— swam across the Rhone at a place where, on account of the width and the rapidity of the river, it was considered an impossible thing to do. This was almost as great a feat as Cæsar's spanning the Rhine with a bridge. On his way from Genoa to Cephalonia, preliminary to devoting himself and his fortune to Greek liberty, after getting out of sight of land at noon daily he jumped from the side of the boat into the sea for a long swim. He was so addicted to swimming while a sojourner in Venice that the nickname-loving Venetians called him variously, "The English Fish," "The Water Spaniel," "The Sea-Devil," "The Dolphin." "He is a good gondolier spoiled by being a poet," said a witty boatman. "Where does he get his poetry?" was asked by another. "He dives for it," was the reply.

He wrote plays, but hated the theater, notwithstanding the fact, or perhaps because of the fact, that he had been a manager of Drury Lane.

Of his deformity, it was more like *Talipes varus* with extreme *equinus* than a dislocation, as has been said; for the great John Hunter, the man who knew more about tendons and joints than any man then living, was consulted about it and recommended for its correction "machinery,"— that is to say, braces. If it had been a dislocation — cutting the tendons was not then known — such an anatomist would likely have reduced it, and that would have been an end of it, and his career might have been diverted into a less picturesque channel, the ship of his existence might have sailed in a calmer sea.

When a child at Aberdeen and during his whole life he was sensitive about this deformity. When a boy, on hearing an allusion to it made by someone on the street, his eyes flashed, he struck the speaker with a whip he held in his hand, and said, "Dinna speak o' that." Later, when he got acquainted with a little boy similarly affected, he was heard to say to someone, "Come and see the twa wee laddies wi' twa club feet running down Broad street." His temper was irascible, but placable also.

"He was generous to a fault and nobly indiscreet," said an intimate acquaintance, and before arriving at manhood he had contracted debts amounting to one hundred thousand dollars. This money was borrowed chiefly at a high rate of interest and for the accommo-

dation of impecunious friends, of whom he had always a great number. He was like Cæsar in this. He supported destitute writers, helped the weak, sympathized with the distressed, made numerous enemies by the confession of infamies of which he was not guilty, and most people knew that he did not need to exaggerate in that direction. There was evidently nothing of what Goldsmith has called "the tranquillity of dispassionate prudence" about him, for the large sums of money that as a poet he dipped from an ink-bottle he generously distributed among his needy friends. On one occasion he gave a young clergyman a thousand pounds as a means of deliverance from debts he had *inherited* rather than contracted. While living with the Guiccioli in Venice his income was four thousand pounds a year, one thousand of which he gave away to charity. He certainly was a strange combination of good and bad elements. Not only was he generous thus with gifts of money, but he took the temporarily embarrassed into his home. Leigh Hunt, with his family, a wife and six not very ruly children, he ensconced in his palace in Italy, furnished them with a suite of rooms, and supplied them with provisions to live in comfort.

One morning he said to Tom Moore's little son, "Here is two thousand pounds," handing him his "Memoirs," worth three times that amount, for Byron's productions brought enormous prices: for example, "Don Juan" brought a thousand pounds a canto, and so immediate and extraordinary was his

popularity,— we might say like a bird singing its immortal song on a tomb, short but never ending,— that sometimes large editions would be sold out in a day.

Commenting on "Childe Harold," in a letter to Lockhart, Sir Walter Scott said, "Vice ought to be a little more modest." Yet it ran through seven editions in four weeks. Fourteen thousand copies of "The Corsair" were sold in one day. Yet he wrote it in ten days. As an additional illustration of his rapidity of composition, he tells us too that he wrote "Lara" while undressing, after coming home from balls and masquerades. "The Bride" was written in four days, which would explain what he means when he declares that his composition had to be done at the first spring, like a tiger for his prey.

His poetry produced an immediate effect, unparalleled in the literary history of any people. Yet he called the amiable though indiscreet John Murray, his chief publisher, "the meanest of God's book-sellers." The reader will recall Mr. Murray as the Scotch printer whose interesting "Life" was issued a few years ago and universally read, and who was so much devoted to poetry and the younger poets that he brought himself to the verge of bankruptcy on several occasions by being their uncompensated publisher, and then to prosperity again by the publication of his own more famous and popular "Cook Book," vacillating thus between the arts poetic and culinary for many years.

The injudicious but sympathetic and overcredulous Captain Thomas Medwyn of the Twenty-fourth Light

Dragoons, Shelley's cousin, says in his "Conversations with Lord Byron," for the noble lord furnished piquant copy for many writing amateurs: "His memory was truly wonderful. He never read his own works except in the proof sheets; yet such was his memory that he could repeat every word of them and everything else worth remembering that he had ever read." "I never knew a man," he further adds, "who shows so much in conversation. There are no concealments,"—this has reference to certain abnormal slanders uttered by Byron against himself and others which the unsophisticated captain swallowed as silly fish are said to swallow gudgeons,—"no injunctions to secrecy. He tells everything he has thought or done, or imagines he has, without reserve, as if he had appropriated to himself the shadiest episodes of the romancers.

"His addiction to nocturnal gin drinking, often a pint a night, this only though while he was in Italy, was due," says the same Plutarch, "to too much confidence in his medical adviser, who recommended it in *viva voce* for a nephritic disorder to which he was subject." Another slander on the profession. He was never a drunkard when everybody drank, but rather extremely abstemious. For long stretches he ate but once a day and lived chiefly on vegetables. His passions were violent; so were his affections; but while the former were often but for a moment the latter extended through life. He could be led by a silken cord rather than a cable.

When Murray remonstrated with him for giving money to a convivial and otherwise unfortunate author to whom nobody else would give a farthing, he said, "It is for that reason I give, because no one else will." "How much do you want?" he asked of the author. "One hundred and fifty pounds." "Very well," he said, "when I return I will deposit that amount with Murray, and he will give it to you in ten-pound monthly installments." The subsequent abuse of this man but elicited Byron's pity.

He was universally read. When first visiting Italy he could hardly speak a sentence of Italian, but finally spoke it like a native. He read Greek, Latin, and French, and was a constant reader of the Bible, especially of the Old Testament, which he liked best. His "Hebrew Melodies" would show that. He committed many chapters to memory. His being brought up in Scotland would account for that. While in Italy when he was said — and the report was confirmed by himself with gusto — to have lived a life of unending debauchery, he studied the Armenian language and translated into it a good deal of the writings of St. Paul.

The Guiccioli, in her interesting but fantastically written "Recollections," writes: "In him was seen the realization of that rare thing in nature, intellectual versatility combined with unswerving principle. Nobility of mind united with a constant heart." Not only was he then living with her, with the consent of her amiable husband, but he had at that time abandoned not only his wife, against whom there were no impu-

tations of unworthiness or immorality, but three or four other women as well. Thus opinions differ, and "nobility, constancy of heart, and unswerving principle" would mean different things, it would seem, to different people.

LADY BYRON

Byron's wife, Anna Isabella Milbanke, the only daughter of Ralph Milbanke (afterward Noël) and mother of Ada, afterward the Countess of Lovelace, Byron's only legitimate child. After Lady Byron's separation from her husband she became the Baroness of Wentworth. She was a woman of superior talent and a nice taste in letters and with a life dedicated to good works.

Facing p. 208.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE "overlanguaged" D'Israeli, in his preface to his "Essay on the Literary Character," says of the sixth Lord Byron: "This man of genius was a moral phenomenon which vanished"—alluding to his early death—"at the moment when by its indications a change was silently operating on the most ductile and versatile of human minds. . . . If the mind of Byron was disorganized and unsettled, so also were its searchings and inquisitions. His opinions indeed were already changed, his self-knowledge much increased, his knowledge of nature much more just, his knowledge of mankind much more profound. . . . Another step and he would have discovered that virtue *is* a reality and happiness a positive existence. He would have found that the hum of human cities is *not* torture, that society is *not* a peopled desert, and that the world is only a place of strife and agony to those who are hostile and therefore agonized."

Goethe, a great admirer of Byron, said of him that "he was inspired by the Genius of Pain." "His chief incentive, when a boy, to distinction," he writes, "was, as we have seen, that mark of deformity on his person by the acute sense of which he was stung into the ambition of being great." To realize something of the continuous intensity of Goethe's enthusiastic admira-

tion you must read Eckermann's "Gespräche." Among many other extravagant things he calls him the greatest mind and imagination that ever existed. taire, Goethe thought Shakespeare, as you and I do, the greatest mind and imagination that ever existed.

Byron tells of himself that many of his poems were composed under depression of spirits and during severe indispositions. "My health," he writes, "is not perfectly re-established. I have recovered everything but my spirits." Or again, showing how, in spite of all, he lived a life of great and varied activity, he writes to a friend, "My time has been occupied in transporting a servant for repeated stealing, performing in private theatricals, publishing a volume of poems, making love, and taking physic; and the drugs I swallowed are of such variety in their composition that between Venus and Esculapius I am harassed to death." So that literally, what with his humiliating lameness and imperious nerves, from cradle to grave — from John Hunter, who "tortured him," to Drs. Bruno and Milligan, the doctors who bled him in his last illness, and in whom he saw "a d——d set of butchers"— he was in the hands of doctors.

Although like most epileptics he but seldom alluded by name to his malady, he never seems entirely to have gotten from under the shadow of it. In one of his letters to Leigh Hunt he declares it to be his opinion that an addiction to poetry is very generally the result of an uneasy mind in an uneasy body. "Disease and deformity," he adds, "have been the attendants of

many of our best. Collins, mad; Chatterton, I think, mad; Pope, crooked; Milton, blind," all of which but shows how susceptible he was to the embarrassments of his own condition. He might have added many other examples of physical incapacity associated with beneficent mentality without being at all convincing, because the cases he cites are merely exceptional. In spite of them nothing is more certain than the sanity of human greatness.

Still harping on his infirmities, he became afraid that his daughter Ada whom he never saw after she was six weeks old,— the late Countess of Lovelace,— might inherit his distemper. A letter from Mrs. Leigh, his half-sister, found by Trelawney among his papers after his death, contained a transcript of a letter from Lady Byron (his wife) to Mrs. Leigh, telling of Ada's health. An unfinished reply to this from his lordship,— the letter mentioned by Moore in his "Life and Correspondence of Lady Byron,"— asks whether she thought that Lady Byron would permit Hetagée, a Turkish child he took a fancy to and desired to adopt, to become a companion to Ada. "Lady Byron," he adds, "should be warned of Ada's resemblance to me, in infancy; and it should be suggested to her that my epilepsy may be hereditary," thus showing not only parental anxiety and affection, but that familiarity with the nature of his disease and the necessity for an attendant until cured, when curable, which evidently caused him much mental distress.

It might be appropriate here to say that Byron's ep-

ilepsy was likely due to alcoholism on the part of his father,— the cause, many authorities believe, of nearly forty per cent. of all cases of epilepsy. The present writer is of the opinion that not only chronic alcoholism,— that is, the state of being under the intoxicating and nerve-deteriorating effects of alcohol all the time,— but acute alcoholism,— that is, being drunk for a few hours and only at long intervals,— other things being equal, is as likely to result in epilepsy. If either parent, or both, are intoxicated during conception the offspring thus conceived is about as likely to be an epileptic or the victim of some other neurosis as if the parents were chronic drunkards. The writer has traced seven cases of epilepsy to solitary or single inebriations on the part of one or both parents. See the author's article, " Relation of Alcoholism to Epilepsy," in the *Journal of the American Medical Association,* February 9, 1907, vol. xlviii; also " Intoxication in the Parent as a Cause of Epilepsy in the Child," printed by the government in *The Alcohol Problem in Its Practical Relations to Life.*

It was this concern, creditable alike to his discretion and affection for others, that, in order to be prepared for every contingency, caused Byron nearly always to include a doctor in his retinue of traveling companions.

CHAPTER XXIV

We have devoted the leisure of the past few months to biographies of distinguished men, especially of poets, and we are always glad to get away from them, out into the garden to be devoured by mosquitoes while pulling weeds. Anything is a pleasant relief after reading the lives of the poets.

Men of great intellectual achievements, especially if their achievements be the result of protracted application, are not, it seems, capable of taking care of themselves. When relieved from their labors they are in need of chaperones, like girls at horse races. Since they are above being advised by their families or the police, governmental protection from the wiles of the wicked is a crying need, it is conjectured, for this class of " supremely gifted people."

The failure on the part of governments to take care of their geniuses, as they do of other perhaps less worthy defectives,— genius, we are told, being a sort of madness,— has been discovered as such a serious lack in our legislative make-up that it has been intimated by someone, Mr. Barrie we think, while writing about Robert Burns, or may be it was Schopenhauer or Schleiermacher or Walter Bagehot — it is safe to ascribe things you are not willing to father yourself to these, since nobody reads them, or if

a few do, they read nothing else — however, it has been intimated by someone that the constitution of every civilized state should contain a clause, or clauses, providing for the protection and management of these men of asymmetrical intellect, otherwise known as " persons of supreme parts." They are so absorbed " laying foundations for immutabilities," like poor erring Henly, for example, who has " just exchanged his cotton nightcap for a martyr's crown," or in the painful production of " euphemistic phrases," an occupation indeed as devitalizing and deadly as picking rags or testing eggs, that when released, like schoolboys just out of school or skylarks descending to the brown earth from their melodious flight to the zenith, they fall an easy prey to the net of the fowler or even more palpably vulgar allurements. " In vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird " does not apply, it would seem, to human singers, or to other great ones not favored with the divine gift of song.

Lord Byron's irregularities, we have noticed, were to a great extent after the labor of composition had left him exhausted, yet exuberant, because of having completed a difficult task. It is then that people of poetic temperament need the mothering of such a government as has been suggested to soothe them back to sanity and to protect them from the seductions of the wicked, ever lying in wait for helpless innocence, and to lure them again to common sense and sobriety. The profane do not seem to know that all great vocations necessitate a continuous and exclusive culture

and "aloofness" from the common affairs of life; consequently they do not make sufficient allowance for the childlike tendency of running into errors of conduct, so common to great writers and other men of supreme faculty, poor things.

Think with tears of the too submissive Goethe with his singular domestic complications and other compromising mutualities. Was it because he was not appreciated in his home? Or think of that tower of philologic and diplomatic strength, Wilhelm von Humboldt,— see *Die Briefe an einer Freundin,*— or unsophisticated Heine as helpless in the coils of wickedness as a bird in the claws of a cat. Or of Lord Nelson, the hero of Trafalgar, who "carried his greatness with the meekness of a child," or of our modern master of mentality and pure *vernunft,* John Stuart Mills, or of the cynical Thackeray, or even of that man of moral rectitude and humanity, Napoleon, like a cedar of Lebanon in a flower-pot destined to destruction and premature death,— conceive of their getting too far away from their mothers' apron strings in time of temptation. Or even think of the austere, self-righteous Dante, of whom it has been said that "he would always be considered a great poet because nobody would read him." What irascibility and vindictiveness might have been taken out of his embittered life and otherwise charming comedy, with its playful episodes specially invented for enemies. What pangs and anguish would have been taken out of ours when we were children — it and Fox's "Book of Martyrs"

were among our carefully selected Sunday reading — if only his government instead of merely banishing him had cut his throat or had put him into some old man's home, or in some retreat for helpless geniuses, and given him a pension. As it was, exile was bad enough; but his embittered compatriots' threatening him "twice" that if he should ever return to Tuscany they would burn him alive, not an empty threat in those "holy" days of the long ago, must have been salt to his stripes, and offers some excuse for his sour looks and brimstone retaliation.

Think, though, of his deserted wife whom nobody seems to consider, so much of a mere hero-worshiper is man. She was "eating another's bread" and climbing other men's stairs, when her acrimonious husband ought to have provided her with bread and stairs of her own instead of frittering away his life over an absurd book that was wicked enough to make Satan laugh. And think of his seven children, whom, great "self-obliterating poet" that he was, *he* never even mentioned either in his books or in his letters, so much concerned was he in putting better men in hell. And our Milton, too, his brother in so many ways, among others adding to the elegance of the Italian tongue, yet he never turned his back on duty. Why did he not have a government guardian, if for nothing else, to interdict his marriage, for which he was no more fit than Bernardine was fit to be hanged?

Since Isaac D'Israeli says that "fortune has rarely condescended to be the companion of genius," en-

lightened government, you might think, ought to supply them — since trained nurses are out of the question — at least with police protection and a secured income.

We repeat, the world does not seem to be aware that the very refinements of imagination and fancy, not to say "frenzy," to which is due the poet's capacity for doing superior work, are at times, too, but the *ignis fatuus* that leads them astray.

Thus until governments rise to the occasion of fostering and protecting their great men, standing as barriers between them and nearly always invincible temptation, as a matter of policy — this is written for people supposed to know Byron — we should do it ourselves, you and I, generous reader, since there is no knowing when even the least of us, "mind you," a favorite colloquialism of Lord Byron, may entertain a genius unawares in our own family. It is thus that the sedulous consideration of a wise wife, wide awake nurse, caretaker, or press agent might transform the most impoverished and impossible genius into the owner of a pew in church, and of a well regulated family. Management! the magic wand transmitting the base metal of indiscretion and folly into the gold of prudence.

The Guiccioli, judging from the unanimous verdict of most of Byron's biographers — not to speak it too profanely or in any way justifying the alliance — would seem for a time to have been the one for him. The probabilities were, though, that after the defeat

of his Quixotic ventures in the East, the failure of his Greek folly or glory, just as you take it, he would have returned to his wife and nearer duty, and dedicated the remainder of his days to wisdom. For, after all, he loved his wife. His heartrending dying words show that; the confession to Moore also that she was "the best woman he ever knew" testifies to the same fact.

In matrimonial incompatibility, or where the faults or unhappiness of wedlock are ascribed to it, the *other woman,* it would seem, would always have been the right one. This has been the conviction and practice of unbridled man from the comparatively more virtuous Hottentots to the renegade preacher who marries divorcées, from the time when man was more of a savage to the present day. But it does not work: the trail of the serpent is over it all, leaving in its tortuous track slime and putrefaction.

Every man, even if a non-epileptic, is not a Julius Cæsar, capable of taking care of himself from untutored childhood to his being carried away captive when a boy, and on through numerous triumphs until his just-in-the-nick-of-time assassination! Everything, — the very spot at the foot of Pompey's statue! the very folds of his garments, "like the pale martyr in his shirt of flame,"— arranged by his all-discerning intelligence!

CHAPTER XXV

For correct medical appraisement it would be difficult to make a complete inventory of such qualities as Byron exhibited. Unlike Cæsar and like Mohammed, his writings at times reflected his disease, complicated perhaps with some other neurosis. They are morbid like the man, sullen, moody, capricious, irritable, restless, uneven, rampant, hurrying from one extreme to another, nothing in moderation, so that you find in him as in some parts of the "Giaour," and in many other places, the sweetest poetry in the English language; in others there are lines that outrage every sense, nothing in moderation, gloating over instead of finding virtue and solace in beauty or beautiful things, as normal man should. Feverish strength rather than calm beauty of style characterizes much of his poetry; even its decorations and embellishments are gaudy and grotesque, "like flowers on the face of the dead," meretricious. It would at times seem as if he wrote as women gamble, to drive away *ennui* or to substitute a feverish and irritable excitement for listless indolence and empty repose.

Much of his poetry and many of his performances could be divided into states or periods, like a fit,—aura, spasm, faintness, prodromus, crisis, sequelæ,—thus harking back not only to a hystero-epileptic

mother about the time of his birth disgraced by a reprobate husband, deprived of dignified protection and all a woman holds dear, but to other progenitors besides his father. There was Captain John Byron of the Guards, the "mad, sad, bad," but not "glad" "Jack" Byron, to use epithets less suitable than villain. And again, there was his grand-uncle, William, the "wicked" Lord Byron, whose heir he became in his eleventh year, and who killed Miss Chaworth's father in a room into which they had retired alone to fight a duel in the dark, for which he was afterwards tried and found guilty of manslaughter and only escaped being hanged by being a peer.

No wonder England wants to abolish the peerage. It seems that according to English law or custom you cannot be a peer and be hanged too. You can be either one or the other, not both. You cannot have everything, even in England. That is the reason their form of government is called a "Limited Monarchy." Even the peerage has its limitations.

This trial of Byron's grandfather for manslaughter became an important item in the history of this aristocratic institution. It took place in Westminster Hall, and the interest in it was so great that tickets of admittance were sold for as high as six guineas apiece. The peers after two days of deliberation returned a verdict of manslaughter. Byron pleaded his privileges as a member of their body, paid his fees and escaped, but the Nemesis of remorse never after aban-

MISS CHAWORTH

"The Heiress of Annesley," perhaps Byron's first sweetheart. Byron's uncle, whose heir he was, killed Miss Chaworth's father in a duel, one of the conditions of which was that the combatants were to be locked up together in a dark room. The uncle was afterward tried for manslaughter and found guilty, but took advantage of his position as a peer to escape the death penalty.

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doned him. He appears henceforth a specter, a haunted man, roaming about under false names " or shut up in the Abbey like a baited savage, shunned by his fellows and the object of the wildest invention." It was believed by the superstitious that " devils attended him " and many other such legends were circulated about " the wicked lord." Byron himself related that his ancestor's " only companions were the crickets that used to crawl over him, and that received stripes with straws when they misbehaved, and that on his death made an exodus from the house in single file." This, however, like the circumstantial account of his own personal adventures may be but the language of imaginative invention.

There is nothing more extraordinary about Byron than his infatuations. There were many of them; but Miss Chaworth, the daughter of the nobleman mentioned above who was murdered like a rat in a hole or like Polonius behind the arras by Byron's granduncle, was the object of his deepest and most genuine affection. An attachment precocious to be sure — he was sixteen, she eighteen years old — but which, if in due time it had been consummated in marriage, might have diverted the troubled current of his life into a quieter haven, and the world might have been deprived of some of its literary treasures as well as adventures, scandals,— products of the Byron of romance and despair, of high resolve and daring,— the soliloquies of Manfred, the exploits of Childe Harold and Don Juan, the lamentations and rebellion

of Cain, and in their place there would have been a Byron depressed but respectable, and likely henpecked and unproductive.

"The Heiress of Annesley," as Miss Chaworth was called, lived on the next estate to Newstead Abbey, Byron's home from his twelfth year. While visiting the young lady he always declined remaining over night, because, as he confessed later, he was afraid the family portraits had taken a grudge against him on account of the duel, and would come down from their frames at night to haunt him.

This fancy the not too serious reader, the one who does not give his days and nights to the study of Addison, will remember was afterward used by Gilbert and Sullivan in the opera of "Ruddygore," which may have been suggested by Byron's boyish confession. From this confession may be seen the undeveloped but poetic mind of the imaginative boy associated with the passion of the man. Finally, on account of having seen a *bogle* (Scotch for ghost) on his way back at night to Newstead, he was prevailed upon to sleep at Annesley during the remainder of his visits.

"In six short summer weeks in her company," said Moore, "he laid the foundation of a feeling that lasted for life."

In an unhappy moment he overheard Miss Chaworth in conversation with her maid say, "Do you think I could care anything for that lame boy?" The speech, as he told afterward, "was like a shot through the heart." Though late at night when he heard it, he

instantly dashed out of the house, and never stopped until he found himself at Newstead Abbey. Thus ended, until tragically renewed long after, one of his most sacred romances.

The relation of these two houses was something like, it would seem, that of the Montagues and Capulets in "Romeo and Juliet." "Our union," Byron said, "would have healed the feuds in our homes for which blood had been spilled by our fathers." He always had an interesting and picturesque way of putting things.

In an exquisite poem, "The Dream," in allusion to Miss Chaworth he writes that

> "She was his life,
> The ocean to the river of his thoughts."

And his future might have been different indeed, and so would ours, as formerly intimated, if his domestic life had been arranged under happier auspices.

It is singular that the two men of modern times exhibiting the greatest ferocity against social convention, as if in a state of constant riot,— George Noel Byron, George Bernard Shaw,— were both pronounced vegetarians and teetotalers. Byron, although generally as abstemious as an anchorite and as temperate as a Mussulman, at times did violence to his principles, but Shaw rigidly adheres to his.

Contrary to general opinion, the belligerent protests of neither are due either to beef or brandy. Allan

Ramsay's lines in his "Poem to Newstead Abbey,"

> "For wild of life, untamed of mood,
> Was Byron; so was Robin Hood,"

had no reference to meat and drink, Lucullus feasts, and the revelry of the cup, but rather to that untrammeled and rebellious state of mind that is remote from philosophic calm and serenity.

Of all men likely to misinterpret adverse circumstances "into proofs of divine grace" Byron and Shaw are the least likely, for protest rather than submission is the key-note of their mental tarantella, a note leonine, boisterous, persistent, without the foreign aid of conciliatory accompaniment.

Think of it, ye carnivorous but anemic multitude demanding daily hecatomb of slaughtered innocence for your enfeeblement.

CHAPTER XXVI

NOTWITHSTANDING Byron's proclamation of being a liberal in politics and his platitudes about social equality, his ridicule of "pride of birth" and his arraignment of the nobility, "a noblemen being," he said, "the tenth transmitter of a foolish face,"— like Shaw, proclaiming himself a socialist,— notwithstanding all this he was at heart an aristocrat. He was unlike Shaw in that he was prouder of his Norman descent than of his mental endowments. Tennyson's lines about its being only noble to be good would have given Byron gooseflesh.

> "Howe'r it be, it seems to me,
> 'Tis only noble to be good.
> Kind hearts are more than coronets,
> And simple faith than Norman blood."

To be sure if it had been any other blood, Shaw's for example, he would have been just as proud of it. It is always *our* blood that elicits extravagant personal admiration. Not many are disloyal enough to their ancestry to say with Burns,

> "Our ancient but ignoble blood
> Has run in scoundrels ever since the flood."

And if they did we would properly think less of them

for saying it. If we should say nothing but good of the dead, then we should be doubly careful to say nothing but good of our own dead. Leave the saying of unkind things to their enemies.

Notwithstanding either Byron's not overly high estimate of the writing fraternity and his belittling of the profession of letters, he knew as well as you, gentle reader with a literary ambition, that the capacity enabling a man to write a book worthy of being read by serious persons,— a great play, poem, or any great work welling out of the heart of man, like a geyser out of an abyss,— is the greatest human achievement. And he knew that nothing is so likely to secure endless fame, the mortal putting on immortality, as the production of one great little book. Temples, mosques, cathedrals, dwindle; the great book lives on.

As we have seen, the immediate physical history of the poet's family on both sides is bad. His mother, although the daughter of a "Gordon of Gight" and a descendant of William Gordon, the third son of the Earl of Huntly by the daughter of King James I of Scotland, had hystero-epilepsy.

Abandoned and robbed by her profligate but handsome husband, she too, the field of her capacity never being overly arable, became periodically flighty. She was kind but irritable; gentle but without self-control; violent but sympathetic and affectionate; fond of her son, yet frequently quarreling with him, especially when she was nervous, which was rather often, her

weather-vane temper turning its point to every breeze. A woman with sick nerves and a sad heart, mostly needing the companionship of some settled person of common sense, calm and serene, when probably there would have been nothing unseemly to be reported in her conduct. Like her son, she needed mothering.

If trained nurses and proper medical treatment for riotous emotions had been in vogue in her day, and her outbursts had been held as secret and as sacred as the conduct of the sick ought to be, and usually is to-day, she would have become, in spite of provocation, an exemplary mother, without reflecting memories. For the domestic standards of her family were high. And notwithstanding compromising folly on the part of some of them she had reason to be proud of her forebears. As it was, within her circle, her son's circle, contemporary writers were lacking in the power to discriminate between sickness and disease,— especially the Byronic intimate set, mostly irresponsible persons living at variance with the moral standards of their country,— and they put an evil construction on everything. Even the obsequious but pretentious Moore did not hesitate to stoop to ungentlemanly insinuations and slander. The few harsh words commonly quoted about Byron's mother are about all that is generally known of a woman who was a descendant of kings and who traced her lineage back to chiefs that had lived in Scotland before Cæsar conquered Britain,— the mother of the most distinguished man of the century.

CHAPTER XXVII

Everybody who reads about Byron, and there are more who read about him than of him, say more referring to his character than to his poetry, and nobody mentions his prose, as if he were a merely moral problem, capable of producing amazement rather than pleasure.

Some have looked upon him as a saint,— in the rough, that is, in the making,— that sooner or later was bound to slough off the unbecoming, while others regard him, like Robert Southey, for example, as a human monster, horrible in every respect. Scott, notwithstanding his esteem, regretted his noble friend's tendency to exhibit himself too much as the Dying Gladiator, says John Nichols, and even compares Byron " when in his spoiled-darling mood " to his peacock screeching before his window, because he chose to bivouac apart from his mate. Sir Walter thus presents us with one of his delicious discriminations. Goethe in his idolatry perceived him almost as a spirit, a sort of angel — see " Euphorium," the lovely monument erected to Byron's memory in the second part of Faust.

But of all who wrote about the author of " Childe Harold " none are so excessively eulogistic and wildly extravagant as Señor Castellar, in his fantastic but

brilliant though short "Life of Byron" which is extravagant to the point of bombast and Quixotic infatuation. Castellar writes of Byron, and as he does so you can in imagination see the panegyrist, his head enveloped in a towel wrung out in ice water, like Sydney Carton in "The Tale of Two Cities." "This extraordinary being," he writes, meaning Byron, "a savage by nature, a mountaineer by habit, from his sublime genius a poet, and for that reason incomprehensible." Again, "The great genius who lived to repeat the aspirations of all peoples and who died young and unfortunate." "He often wandered," he is free to admit, "from the right path; yet this age, the commencement of the century which beheld the Apollo-like head of Byron, *crossed with sunbeams and with shadows,* could exclaim, This is my symbol!"

The Spaniard in his enthusiasm for his superman is nothing if not pyrotechnic,— and his book is unlike anything ever written about Byron. Not only the book itself but the preface to the original edition, written by his friend Jose Roman Leal, of Havana, as an illustration of the *under-a-curse* style of literature is *par excellence.* Castellar's is a volcanic book, in which everything surges, smokes, smolders, boils; "lightnings flash through the brain of its hero, serpents entwine themselves around his heart, his pleasures are embittered by poison, his soul is devoured with the disgust of reality," and being naturally "loyal," he said, "he struck the earth with his feet looking for the flowing of its joy." This we surmise

is an allusion to Moses striking the rock. Listen to this: "In his changeful mind ideas were vacillating flames, kindled by stormy passions, his nerves seemed to snap like the string of a harp when strained unduly." "He passed his days in a languor resembling death, and his nights in excitement bordering on insanity." In describing his hero when he lived at No. 8 St. James street, central part of London, he says of him: "He was in the zenith of his fame, in all the pride of youth and manly beauty, in the fulness of his mental vigor, in which his lips scattered oracles, his imperious glances magnetized those before him; the man bore candor stamped upon his features; his eyes, of a rare brilliancy and indefinable color, seemed to possess an immortal brightness. Whatever the sculptor has chiseled in order to express genius, either before or after his time, appeared in Byron, from the Apollo Belvedere to the bust of Napoleon by Canova." Again, "Perhaps it would be impossible to paint or model genius, without copying the features of that truly Apollo-like physiognomy." "Lord Byron possessed, too, all the faculties essential to an orator,—sensibility, imagination, ideas, a flexible voice, which responded to the various tones of thought, a flow of words, clear notions of justice. He failed only in stability of purpose."

He continues with picturesque detail and with the abandon possible only to a Spaniard, as if he had been an eye-witness of all the circumstances, supposed attachments, and scandals of his life, beginning with

THE COUNTESS GUICCIOLI

The Countess Teresa Gamba Guiccioli, lent by her husband to Lord Byron during his residence in Italy. This thrifty nobleman even rented to the pair sumptuous apartments in his palace. During the time of their living together in Byron's villa at La Mira, outside of Venice, the Count wrote a letter to his young wife asking her to try to persuade Byron to lend him 1,000 pounds at 5 per cent. Instead of thirsting for the blood of his wife's betrayer—some say Byron was not the tempter—he only longed for a little of the Englishman's money. Finally the husband mustered up courage enough to run away with his own wife, to Byron's great delight. Her book about Byron extols him as a combination of saint and demigod.

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Miss Chaworth and ending with Madame de Staël.

Thus, of the Guiccioli, "Byron — with a wife in England and a conquest of a dozen hearts more or less scattered like autumn daisies [daisies, literal translation] over the face of the bleak earth." "From the beginning," it seems, "his career was accompanied with retinues of feminine sighs." "He had gone to Italy," according to our author, "searching for the other half of his soul. She was somewhere, but where? That was the unsolved question, until one night at the house of the Countess Abbrizzi, the Staël of Italy, he met her. Teresa was her name, the wife of Count Guiccioli, a giddy young creature weary of festivities and her middle-aged husband; and Byron was tired of woman so far met. They saw and loved each other. A mutual glance," says the sentimental Castellar, "was sufficient to make these two souls understand each other and to unite them forever. Neither of them could remember afterward which said the first word."

"Byron amid his vices had searched for Teresa through all his dreams, and Teresa through all her dreams had sought for Byron. They met like two shipwrecked creatures tossed by the same wave, and without any hope of making their love lawful. She wedded to a 'wealthy old miser' who merely squandered his money upon her, and let her do as she pleased, and he to a mere intolerant Protestant of austere and jealous chastity. Consequently they were mutually miserable. Their ill-assorted marriages were like two brazen walls between two hearts of fire; yet

they passed over these barriers for the sake of each other."

"The Count quitted Venice and went with his wife to Ravenna," continues the biographer. "Her thoughts were constantly with Byron, and she naturally was unable to bear up under the sadness of absence. She became alarmingly ill, and Byron hastened to Ravenna, being summoned to her side, for she was believed to be expiring. . . . On the eighth of June, 1819, he was standing by the bedside of this woman who was dying of love. . . . On seeing him enter, Teresa revived, as the tender violet expands at the kiss of April."— Gracious goodness! —"All her physicians agreed that there was no cure for her malady of sadness and languor but one. The presence of the poet was enough to bring back the color to her cold cheeks, a light to her eyes already closing in death. . . . That same day Teresa was able to go into the garden, and leaning on the arm of the poet under the virgin branches of the pines, among the bay-trees and myrtles she spoke of her recollections and her hopes."

"The Count with difficulty resigned himself to his part in society, which, though tolerating evils of this nature always in Italy, punishes them by malignant glances and whispered observations."

According to Castellar, "Byron spoke of an elopement,"— others have said the suggestion came from Teresa,—"although nobody but himself could see the necessity for it. And Teresa, the romantic young

creature, recalled the expedient of Juliet, who, clothed in the costume of the grave took a narcotic, shut herself up in the family vault, and waited until her lover should, with a look or a kiss sent through the grating, convert the funereal pantheon into a paradise, the cold corpse, *alias* sleeping beauty, into a living Hebe."

"This enchanting creature," he continues, "had been but a few months out of a convent, and was all innocence." It is truly miraculous, the effect produced on innocence by convents. "It is touching," continues the susceptible writer, "to read the lines written by Lord Byron on a blank leaf of the volume of 'Corinne' which Teresa left in forgetfulness in a garden in Bologne." "That simple love of the heart," he asserts, "compared to the hyperbolic love mentioned in 'Corinne' appears as a lily of the field beside a false flower."

"She sacrificed everything for Byron," continues the historian. "At twenty she was one of the muses, and at sixty-eight or eighty"— here he seems to be in doubt —"she was a wealthy old marchioness, who flung an inconsiderate book upon the poet's grave." That is the ungallant way, after all his romantic sentimentality, that Castellar refers to the Guiccioli's book, "My Recollections of Lord Byron." Leaving Venice, Byron with la Contessa and her brother, Count Gamba, afterward established themselves in the villa Rossa at Monte Nero, a suburb of Leghorn, from which port at this date the remains of his "natural" daughter Allegra, whose mother was the daughter of

William Godwin's wife, were conveyed to England to be buried at Newstead Abbey.

In the beginning of the *liaison* with the fair countess, afraid of what her husband might say when he discovered the nature of the attachment,—" for she was an innocent young creature just out of a convent," as before quoted,— she, like the lovers in Rostand's " *Les Romanesques,*" proposed to Byron that he should fly with her to America, to the Alps, to some unsuspected isle in the far seas — her limitations hardly excluded the moon. She even proposed the idea of feigning death, as Castellar tells us, " like Juliet, and rising,— like the dead on the Day of Judgment,— from the tomb to be forever united!" But when the absent Count returned, they found that neither expedient was needed. Instead, " He invited Byron to be his guest, rented him a suite of rooms in his palace, with his wife, it would seem, thrown into the bargain."

Thus they lived together, mutually devoted, five years, though not in the same place. Both testify that they were the happiest years of their lives, until the accommodating old nobleman at last mustered up courage enough to run away with his own wife; an amicable conclusion, entirely agreeable to Byron, who had had enough of Italy, and being released, took his departure to Missolonghi, to help the Greeks throw off the yoke of Turkey.

During his residence with the Guiccioli her father, mother, brother, and husband all lived happily together under the same roof. After his separation from her

and during the remainder of his life he held her in the highest esteem, and if she had permitted would have left her the greater part of his fortune. She insisted instead upon his leaving it to his half-sister, Mrs. Leigh, and always refused to accept money from the poet, whose memory she revered to the end of her octogenarian days.

A quarter of a century after the poet's death she was married to the French Marquis de Boissy, who was wont proudly to introduce her as the "former mistress of Lord Byron."

"This was not Byron's first experience in 'affairs of the heart' in Italy," says the Liberator. "Before this episode with the Countess he, still in quest of the other half of his soul, was so wasted and attenuated that his friends hardly knew him. His emaciated form and pallid face gave him the appearance of a corpse animated only by the brilliancy of his fatefully beautiful eyes." Castellar puts him out of countenance sometimes but never puts out his optics. "Among his passing affections was a lovely woman of dark complexion, dark eyes, and sanguine temperament, tall in stature, and as robust as a Venus by Titian. . . . She was as sensual as a Bacchante, but capable of love and self-sacrifice, a married woman and the mother of a family. . . . She kept a boarding-house,"— horrors! —"but was ready to leave all," every boarder, "for the sake of the poet!" Byron really ought to have had a chaperon, as we suggested a few chapters back. "One day this Amazon, this Lucretia Borgia, saw

Byron talking to her sister-in-law, when she came up and gave her a blow with her shut fist on the side of the head, which sent her spinning across the street with as many whirring stars in her head," says the astronomical Castellar, "as there are in the zenith at midnight." Byron naturally regarding discretion the better part of valor, his vaunted skill as a pugilist availed him nothing, because, we imagine, the aggressor was a lady. Colonel Roosevelt asserts that "pugilists are men of keen moral discrimination." However, soon after this exhibition of fisticuff prowess Byron left the house and the heroine and went into retirement for a while in the palace Monzenigo on the Grand Canal.

We learned long ago from another poet that "strong walls do not a prison make nor iron bars a cage," and in this case that neither the motes nor chevaux-de-frises of castles or palaces are sufficient barriers against the approaches of adoring women, especially Italian women, for "his stronghold was invaded and became the scene of adventures with another, and if possible more muscular, admirer, Margharetta Congi by name, the wife of a linen draper." "She has been compared," says the beauty-loving Spaniard, "with La Fornarina, the *only* love of Raphael," wails the liberal-minded enthusiast. Poor Raphael, with his narrow amatory limitations, restricted by his devotion to art to but one, with perfidious Albion as usual claiming the lion's share.

"In Venice there are people of the lower class,"

MARGARITA COGNI

The "Amazonian" heroine of Castellar's "Lord Byron"; one of the "noble Lord's" many Italian victims. "Her passions," says the extravagant Spaniard, "were as ardent as a giant volcano in eruption."

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continues our scribe, "who sell oysters in the market-place," and bad oysters at that, "who nevertheless like to have their ears soothed by Italian translations of the English poets,"— what a mission for poet and translator alike,—"and to listen to the stories of their lives!"

"Margharetta was a woman of the people,"— he makes you afraid of what is coming after such a declaration,—"a woman who could neither read nor write, yet was fond of poetry and was accustomed to tyrannize over her family, and who concealed *neither a fold of her soul nor a throb of her weak woman's heart* from the public," and consequently did not trouble herself to put any restraint upon her actions. "She was violently in love with Byron and he, not knowing how to escape in his dejection,"— and do you wonder? — "sought with much anxiety a burial place among the lovely islands of the Adriatic. . . . Floating along in his gondola, he went about the Venetian archipelago to choose a spot to plant *a willow-tree* [literal translation], the branches of which drooping over the water should throw a shadow after his suicide over his tomb." This is indeed too sad. "But as if to hasten his repose in the dreamless bed, he gave himself up to the study of different races, to the plastic art, to the intoxicating songs of the carnival, often turning away weary from a festival."

In disconsolation "he wandered among the graves and met Margharetta, who at this time exercises much influence over his life." Now comes another hysteri-

cal outburst. "The boiling Venetian blood throbbed in her veins and excited her passions. She was tall, her shoulders broad, her arms robust,"— doesn't she make you nervous? —"her face handsome, her head vulgar. . . . She loved almost to folly, but was jealous to madness . . . she caressed Lord Byron and she maltreated him,"— can you believe it? "She met him"— among the tombs —"with the smile of an angel"— not the angel of the resurrection — "and struck her nails into him with the ferocity of a tigress. . . . The golden pin with which she confined her hair served her for a stiletto. . . . Her ideas were no clearer than those of a primitive savage. Her passions were as ardent as a giant volcano in eruption. Her character was formed by the winds of the lagoons and her soul was opened by the southern sun." Alas, poor ghost!

"In the palazzo Monzenigo he had collected horses, bears, peacocks, cats, dogs, parrots, monkeys, and all kinds of birds, and this woman like a wild Eve in a strange paradise, angry with Adam, instead of enticing him to eat *harmless apples,* actually got drunk, and beat him." Notwithstanding her ferocity, however, Byron, "the hen-pecked," deceived her. In consequence, "one day there was a terrible uproar, the parrots uttered indescribable noises, the cats mewed, the dogs barked, the furniture flew in pieces, the Venetian mirrors strewed with rain of little crystals the pavement of the palace, everything was in commotion, as if struck by a hurricane or shaken by an earthquake; it

was caused by Margharetta, who had encountered a rival,"— another! —" and had fought with her a terrible battle sustained on both sides with vigor and heroism."

Castellar's torrential epithets and descriptions, and without any apparent sense either of the moral incongruity of it all, are curiosities in literature not mentioned by D'Israeli, and indicate in a rather startling way the different ethical standards of Latin and Anglo-Saxon peoples.

The following humiliating glimpse of Byron which Miss Frances Power Cobbe permitted me to copy — while I was her guest in North Wales some years ago — from an autographic letter in her possession, written by Mrs. Hemans to Miss Margaret Lloyd, exhibits an intimation of his life in Italy anything but pleasing or romantic, and certainly contradicts the theory that " his acquaintance with the Guiccioli had an ennobling influence on his character."

" Your affection for Lord Byron," the letter begins, " will not be much increased by the description I am going to transcribe for you of his appearance and manners abroad. My sister is now at Venice and has sent me the following sketch of the ' Giaour ': ' We were present at the governor's, after which we went to a *conversazione* at Mlle. Benoni's, where we saw Lord Byron, and now my curiosity is satisfied. I have no wish ever to see him again. A more wretched, depraved-looking countenance it is impossible to imagine! His hair streaming down almost to his shoulders

and his whole appearance slovenly and dirty. Still there is something which impels you to look at his face, although it inspires you with aversion,—a something entirely different from any expression on any countenance I ever beheld before. His character I hear is worse than ever; dreadful it must be, since every one says he is the most dissipated person in Italy, exceeding even the Italians themselves.' "

Thus we present the estimate in which the same character is seen by different nationalities and is judged according to different standards.

In describing the bombastes-furioso-delirium of Señor Castellar, with laughter rather than tears, I am aware even in the presence of these humiliating disclosures of the possibility of there being virtue in the vilest. You may remember Suetonius wrote an interesting chapter in enumeration of the *good* deeds of Nero! Equally possible, we surmise, might be set forth in picturesque fashion the *evil* in the lives of the most saintly. The elements of good and bad are so mixed in us that sometimes it is not so much what we do as what we refrain from doing that counts most in the make-up of character.

> "Then at the balance let's be mute,
> We never can adjust it;
> What's wrong we partially may compute,
> But know not what's resisted."

Mr. Nichol — see his "Life of Byron," published by Harper Brothers,— says Byron "was *lured* into liaisons of all sorts and shades. Some now acknowledged as

innocent were blazed abroad by tongues less skilled in pure invention than in distorting truth." And when to this is added the strange fact that he himself sent anonymously to the English and French newspapers outrageous slanders about himself, entirely without foundation, merely to astonish and confuse his countrymen, it is easy to understand how he must have been estimated by his contemporaries who did not know him.

His intense egotism and self-importance, and the perverse fancy he had for falsifying his own character and imputing to himself faults the most alien to his nature, was pathologic, having to do with disease. He had at times hallucinations of splendor even in iniquity, was pompous in the proclamation of moral delinquencies, and like the vulgar braggart of the tavern and street corner, but with more of an excuse, was vain of the power of his fascinations over weak women. There is the coarse in him, of the man lacking firm discrimination; this also is pathologic. His alternating between denunciation and panegyric was without manly control. He was no respecter of persons, but when the fit was on denounced and held up to ridicule alike imaginary antagonists and the people he had helped. Neither friend nor foe was safe from his scorn. His life, he tells us in "Childe Harold," was one long war with self-fought foes or friends by himself banished, for his mind had grown suspicion's sanctuary. Getting opinions of men from Chesterfield, Rochefoucauld, and Machiavelli, who were among his favorite writers, he mistrusted everybody.

"Never," says Macaulay, somewhat grandiloquently, "had any writer so vast a command of the whole eloquence of scorn, misanthropy, and despair. From maniac laughter to piercing lamentations there is not a note of human anguish of which he was not master." Yet in spite of all that has been said, compromising enough, Heaven knows, the inmates of his family were extremely attached to him, and he too had that love for his tried servants,— being interested in all their affairs,— so common to England. He was a hero to his household, and men and women from the humble plebeian to the proud aristocrat, from commonalty to royalty, were at his feet, while fashionable and literary women vied with one another in being afraid of him and in doing him homage. Everybody, — from the greatest authors, as we have seen, to the merest amateurs,— rushed into print about him. Most persons admired him; some too were horrified by his reported wickedness. The poet-laureate, Robert Southey, seriously looked upon him as "wickedness incarnate," the Countess Guiccioli said he was an "archangel," Carlyle called him a "sulky dandy," and while Goethe held him in high esteem as a man, and "the greatest poet since Shakespeare," his terrified wife thought him a lunatic.

Byron himself would seem to have wished to be considered the most notorious man of the century. He took particular pains, as we have seen, to make his reputation as bad as possible, so that what with his own romancing and the detraction of so many people, his

reported iniquities are beyond human capacity and credibility. He even went to the extent, as we have seen, of sending slanderous letters about himself to foreign papers, telling of outrages he had never committed, just for the fun of seeing how his friends would be shocked when reading them at home. These illustrations of inventive malignancy, written not about someone else, but himself, exhibit a perversion of egotism unparalleled, and surely imply, if not an unbalanced mind, at least lack of self-respecting dignity. Of his religion — and everybody has a religion, and nothing in his life reveals his character and aspirations or the lack of them as much as does his attitude toward the invisible: you cannot know a man without knowing his beliefs — it would be difficult to define just what it was. He did not deny Christianity except in his conduct. On a certain occasion he writes to Moore, "I cannot understand what people mean by calling me irreligious." Then he delivers himself of this bit of boisterous protest against painting and collaterally against saints and churches, which you would think would enable him to understand why he was said to be irreligious:

"You must recollect that I know nothing of painting, and that I detest it, unless it reminds me of something I have seen or think it possible to see; for which reason I spit upon and abhor all saints and subjects of one-half the impostures I see in the churches and palaces, and when in Flanders I never was so disappointed in my life,"— and no wonder,—

" as with Rubens and his eternal wives and infernal glare of color, and in Spain I did not think much more of Murillo and Velasquez."

While corresponding with an amiable clergyman interested in the salvation of his soul, he writes: " I will have nothing to do with your immortality. We are miserable enough in this life without the absurdity of speculating on another. And as for conduct I will bring ten Mussulmans who shall shame you all in goodwill to men and prayer to God." This recalls an incident in the life of Leo X, the son of Lorenzo de Medici, who when a boy of thirteen was created a cardinal by Innocent VIII, and at thirty-six years became Pope. On a certain occasion, while hearing a discussion as to the immortality or mortality of the soul, he took the latter side, " for," said he, " it would be terrible to believe in a future state. Conscience is an evil beast who arms man against himself." But to return to Byron. " I am no bigot to infidelity, either," he writes, " and certainly did not expect that because I doubted the immortality of the soul I should be charged with denying the existence of God." In the same strain, in a passage from another letter, he concludes that " man's pretensions to eternity were merely an expression and illustration of his exaggerated egotism and vanity." Whether this familiar reflection on man's vanity even originated with Byron or not I do not know, but this I know, that cavilers against a future state have repeated it often since as if it were original with themselves. It seems incredible that

a person of Byron's ability, the observed of all observers, a man of such commanding position in England, should have been the victim of such vulgar water-carrier infamies in Italy as recorded by Señor Castellar.

In connection with such philandering, there is still another intimacy recorded in his life, which to ignore would be like writing a life of Goethe without mentioning Frederica Priov, of Sessenheim, or Bettina von Arnim, of the house of Brentano. We allude to the attachment between him and the emotional, half-demented Bacchante, Lady Caroline Lamb, granddaughter of the first Earl Spencer and wife of Lord Melbourne. In her nineteenth year this romantic daughter of the sun married William Lamb, afterward Lord Melbourne, and became and remained a reigning belle for some years afterward, in spite of her domestic life's having been marred by occasional eccentricities that perhaps might be laid to the charge of insanity rather than depravity.

Because of the partiality of the Countess of Blessington for Byron, Lady Caroline desired an introduction, and after meeting him recorded in her diary, "Mad, bad, and dangerous." But when afterward he called at Melbourne house, on his being announced, "she flew to her toilet table, to beautify herself for his conquest." And judging from her portrait, poor thing, she very much needed the foreign aid of ornament to make her even passable.

Byron fell a willing victim to her blandishments.

Likely the splendidly equipped establishment,— for he never had a home of his own, and had only, as it were, seen the apples in the garden of the Hesperides over the wall of other homes,— and the prominent social position of the lady had a good deal to do with it, for in spite of the glowing panegyric of the always too lenient Castellar, he was often guilty himself of the caddishness he condemned in others. However, like a pair of paraquets in a gilded cage, they became closely intimate and inseparable, and their whisperings and confidences and transgressions of good social usages became the subject of general gossip.

Like Swift, Stella, and Vanessa, they exchanged pseudonyms with each other. Byron became "Conrad," after the hero of his "Corsair,"—"the man of one virtue and a thousand crimes,"—and she, "Medora," the disloyal wife of the same romance. And thus they spent the greater part of the following year in each other's company. "Conrad" controlled the life of the submissive "Medora" as Goethe did that of his lady correspondents. Like Othello with Desdemona, he beguiled her with a record of his adventures, which likely he never had, until the lady imagined him a superlative hero and after her own heart. He detailed, we may suppose, with wonted vigor and exaggeration the story of his life, from year to year, from boyish days to the blessed moment he met her in whom his soul delighted. He told her, we may imagine, but with a less noble purpose than his Moorish predecessor, of disastrous chances, of moving accidents of flood and

THE RT. HON. LADY CAROLINE LAMB

The "eccentric" Lady Caroline Lamb,—the Mrs. Felix Lorraine of "Vivian Gray," the Lady Montcagle of "Venetia," figuring also in Mrs. Humphry Ward's "William Ashe,"—daughter of the Earl of Bessborough, the wife of the amiable William Lamb, afterward Lord Melbourne. She infatuated Byron for a season. When he finally cast her off she became his most whimsical enemy.

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field, of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach, of being taken by the insolent foe and sold into slavery,— such superficial semblances of general probabilities were the pursued process,—until he finally had obtained such a position of command, both of the lady and of the mansion, that he did everything in the premises but pay the bills. He presided over the invitations of guests, and gave imperial rules for the management of the establishment.

"Medora," the incorrigible but then the affable, by way of generous reciprocation proclaimed in the ear of a waiting universe that they were "affinities!" The word came into vogue about that time, due, we conjecture, to the title of one of Goethe's novels, *Die Wahlvervandlshaften,* which had then been translated into English under the title of "Elective Affinities."

It started, it might be said, the modern rage for divorce among the addled community. Yet Goethe's purpose, judging by what he said to Eckermann about it in the "Gespräche," was to point out rather the unwisdom of divorce on account of inclination or incompatibility of temper, since no two persons ever had thought or ever could think alike, and that for this, sympathetic tolerance and mutual respect rather than separation were the panaceas.

Thus "Medora," as we have said, generously reciprocating with "Conrad" for relieving her husband of the care of his wife and establishment, publicly declared herself his affinity and offered him her jewels. The jewels he declined. This, it seems, was the popu-

lar mode for all heroines of romance at that period.

This went on *ad nauseam* until Byron's appetite sickened and so died. The attachment had to come to an end. Likely there were other attractions. Besides "Conrad," with all his assurance, became alarmed at the emotional intensity of "Medora's" preference and also weary of her excessive talk about herself — for she too was a literary person — when he wanted to talk about himself. Because of the jarring thus of their mutual egotisms, and also, as hinted, because of the excessive proclamations of their intimacy, he contrived to discover a loophole of escape by having her sent back to Erin. No matter how dainty and confiding the victim that came within the enchanted or malign circle of his influence,— you may use either,— she sooner or later emerged crumpled and disgraced.

The poor lady returned from her exile to her native land not only uncured but rather, like the man possessed of the devil, with the last state worse than the first. "For a peat that's half burned will soon kindle again." She beset him with renewed advances, became so importunate for the old friendliness that she would not take No for an answer, and notwithstanding commands given to the servants to the contrary, to his horror and astonishment she penetrated stealthily to his apartments and presented herself before him disguised in the garb of a page!

On another occasion on being rebuffed, she threatened to stab herself with a pair of scissors and bleed to death in his presence. Everything else failing to

cause his lordship to relent, she went to the other extreme and offered gifts to anyone who would put an end to him. She announced publicly the burning of his effigy and his letters,— the letters! that was a pity,— then became clamorous for a lock of his hair. She both denounced and idolized him as the man whom she called her " betrayer "; yet it is said by certain apologists that Byron was innocent in the matter and did what he did in the way of engrossing her attention unwittingly.

During all this — can the reader imagine the effect it must have produced on the community, and indeed the world, emanating from the most exclusive aristocracy of Europe? — her apathetic but none the less perplexed husband, whose duty it was to take care of his wife as well as the state, wickedly, we say, regarded it all as the harmless infatuation of a school girl for a new dress, laughed at the hero-worship of the weak wife with her irresolute, retreating chin and general lack of discrimination.

Finally, assuming an attitude of immovable hostility, she made him the wicked hero of her new novel, " Glenarvon," in which she embroidered in designs of her own fantastic invention the not too chaste texture of his lordship's original fabric.

The last scene of all that ends this strange eventful history was when years afterward her coach was stopped by a long line of vehicles following a plumed hearse and ending in a concourse of silent mourners stretching out into invisibility. " Whose funeral is

that?" she asks. "Lord Byron's from Greece," was the reply. "Being refused burial in Westminster Abbey, he is being taken for interment to the village church of Hackenall, Torkard, near Newstead."

She died a few months after this pathetic episode, the subject of her dying bequest being Byron's miniature, which she always kept by her, and which she left to her dear friend, Lady Morgan, as if she, too, like poor Barbara, sighing under her sycamore, uttered as her swan song, "Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve, sing willow, willow, willow."

Mrs. Humphry Ward has revived interest in Caroline Lamb, introducing her into one of her late novels, "The Marriage of William Ashe," under the name of Mary Ashe.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The following specimens of what might be called the wit, wisdom, and whimsicalities of Lord Byron, showing the working of his mind under ordinary prose circumstances, in confirmation of the theory that it was not impaired by his malady, I have gathered at haphazard and set down without arrangement from spontaneous utterances, "Conversations" with various persons, and also from his collected letters and other prose writing.

Like Will Honeycomb in the "Spectator," the noble lord had "a vast deal of fire in his conversation," and the reader will see from these illustrations of his "infinite variety" what a master of stately prose he might have been, if he had wished it. Yet Goethe, who did not know his prose, with all his admiration for Byron, said that "he was only great as a poet, that when he came to reflect he was a child."

He had such a keen sense of the harmonious possibilities of language that even when his compositions were not profound they were at least rhythmical. Yet the only real music he was capable of comprehending was the singing of Tom Moore, and it would seem that it was the language and diction, "the syllabling of the words," to borrow a phrase from N. P. Willis, rather than the music, that appealed to him most. For he no

more had really an ear for music — nor for rhetoric either — than he had an eye for art, and a keen observer might discover quite a number of weeds among his flowers of speech.

We will begin then with the following " taste of his quality."

" To let a person see that you have discovered his faults," he says, " is to make him an enemy for life." Speaking of friends, he cynically asserted, " The only truths your friends tell you are your faults, and the only thing they give you is advice."

As an illustration of the morbid side of his mind — most persons have a morbid side, without the foreign aid of epilepsy — in a familiar conversation with a fair friend he averred: " When I have looked on some face I love, imagination has often figured the changes that death must one day produce on it,— the worm rioting on lips now smiling, the features and hues of health changed to the livid and ghastly tints of putrefaction,— and the image conjured up by my fancy has left an impression for hours that the actual presence of the object, in all its bloom of health, has not been able to banish. This is one of my pleasures of the imagination."

How strangely persistent the survival of this gruesome yet fallacious association of death and worms, this projecting of the mythologic and past into the actual and present, as if it were still true. It was in the long ago, when numbers of dead were cast into one pit, inadequately covered, or exposed after battle

or during the plague, because of the inability or indifference or ignorance of the barbarous past, that the exposed bodies were rendered accessible as hatching places for the eggs of the pestiferous fly, which, because of the warmth engendered by putrefaction, were transformed into maggots later on. This sight must have been a familiar one in the old days, but it is not true now. With the science of asepsis applied to mortality, the idea of the body's becoming food for worms as in the days of Job,—"And though after my skin worms destroy this body,"—may be relegated to the limbo of abolished conditions.

Of his half-sister Augusta, Mrs. Leigh,—the subject of Mrs. Stowe's unnecessary and unfortunate book, "Lady Byron Vindicated,"—his solitary instance of constant devotion, he said: "To me she was in the hour of need as a tower of strength. She knew all my weaknesses, had love enough to bear with them. She was the most thoughtful person I ever knew, and was my only source of consolation in the trouble connected with the misunderstanding with my wife. She never forsook me."

He also made the following confession about Lady Byron, to whom he was always attached, for like the sailor in the comic opera, notwithstanding promiscuous alliances "his 'art was true to Poll." He said he was not sincere in his implied censures of her, and that he was sorry he had written them, "they were done just to spite and vex her." Among other things he called her in his haste, "the moral Clytemnestra of

her lord." He also accused her of deceit, averments incompatible, equivocations.

"And thoughts which dwell in Janus' spirits,
The significant eye which learns to lie with silence —
The pretext of prudence with advantages annexed,
Acquiescence in all things which tend, no matter how, to the desired end,
All found a place in thy philosophy."

Yet he said of this same wife: "I do not believe there ever was a brighter, kinder, more amiable or agreeable being than Lady Byron. I never had, or can have, any reproach to make against her when with me." Again he said, in all soberness, showing how matrimonially obtuse he was: "I would willingly renew my marriage with her on a lease of twenty years!" Twenty years? What incredible confidence!

Quite a scheme, though, marriage for a limited period, to be renewed, we suppose, at the end of the contract. Yet this shows that the proposition of one of our western countrymen lately on the same subject,—"trial or experimental marriages,"—did not have even the merit of originality.

"Contact with other people" Byron called "the whetstone that sharpened wit." Speaking of ladies of uncertain age, he ungallantly asserted, "Women hovering between heaven and earth, like Mahomet's coffin, that is to say, floating between maturity and old age, are always bores." He hurriedly comes to the

rescue of himself, however, and continues, "I have known, though, a few delightful exceptions." Then he spoke of the "autumnal charms" of a certain lady, who reminded him of "a landscape by Claude Lorrain, her beauty enhanced by her setting sun, whose last dying beams threw a radiance around her."

"Age," he declared, "is beautiful when no attempt is made to modernize it. It is like a ruin reminding you of romance, unless restored." "What a pity that of all flowers none fade so soon as beauty."

How limited, after all, must have been his experiences! Who has not known women the complete beauty of whose appearance has not come until after fifty or sixty? The most beautiful women we ever have known are now over sixty years old and their characters grow more beautiful every day.

His views of Shakespeare are as extreme in their absurdity as Voltaire's, but not as excusable, because *he could* read English. "Shakespeare," he said, "owed one-half of his popularity to his low origin . . . and the other half to the remoteness of the time in which he wrote from our day. . . . All his vulgarisms are attributed to the circumstances of his birth and breeding, depriving him of a good education. . . . With two such excuses, lack of education and remoteness of time, any writer may pass muster, and when to these is added the being a sturdy hind of low degree, which to three parts of the commonalty of England has a peculiar attraction, one ceases to wonder at his supposed popularity. I say supposed

popularity, for who now goes to see his plays, and who, except country parsons or mouthing stage-struck theatrical amateurs, reads them?"

Yet with a noble disregard of that "consistency" which is said to be "the vice of little minds" his lordship does not hesitate to quote Shakespeare familiarly and to plagiarize from him frequently, and not only from him but from everybody else. Maybe in his case, however, it is not plagiarism, for we might say of Byron what Dryden said of Ben Jonson, "He invades authors like a monarch, and what would be theft in other poets is only victory in him."

But in spite of this, yet in keeping with the moral obliquity of his character, few persons knew Shakespeare better than Byron. In one canto of "Don Juan" we counted forty-two allusions to things in Shakespeare, and there may have been others that we failed to recognize. "We often find him repeating long passages from Shakespeare to his friends," says the Countess of Blessington, "with a harmonious voice and elegant pronunciation that would have made him distinguished as an actor or orator."

In the same breath in which he slanders Shakespeare he declares "Pope the greatest of modern poets and a philosopher as well as poet."

Byron, it would seem, had but two ambitions: one, to be thought the greatest poet of his day; the other, a nobleman and a man of fashion who could have attained distinction without the aid of poetry. He had in everything all the vanity of a certain type of neu-

rotic, and liked to be considered "a poet among noblemen, and a nobleman among poets."

He did not care for clergymen, and took a vulgar pleasure in irreverences of speech in their presence, merely to annoy them. Medical men were also objects of constant derision. Yet it was to a clerical friend that he gave outright one thousand pounds with which to cancel debts that he had not contracted, but which he had inherited, and which annoyed him a great deal; and physicians, notwithstanding his opposition, were among his best friends.

"I have as little faith in medicine as Napoleon had," he declared, "because the men I have met who practice it are so deficient in ability." In 1810 he was seized with a severe fever in the Morea and his life was saved, he asserted, by his Albanian followers' frightening away the doctors! Yet we learn from Madden, Moore, Dallas, Blessington, Medwyn, Hobhouse, Trelawny, and others that he was continually drugging himself. He had, as it would seem, as much faith in empiric medicine as Lord Bacon had in witches, or as Cæsar had in prognostications based upon the reeking entrails of animals.

"I should hold a woman capable of laughing at sentiment as I should and do a woman who has no religion. Much as I dislike bigotry I think it a thousand times more pardonable than irreligion. There is something unfeminine in the want of religion that takes off the peculiar charm of woman."

In talking of authorship he said: "A successful

book makes a man a wretch for life. It engenders in him a thirst for notoriety and praise, and precludes the possibility of repose." Quoting from Voltaire, he said, "The fate of a literary man is like a flying fish: if he dives in the water the fish devour him, and if he rises in the air he is attacked by the birds." This, by the way, is not so true now as it was then, when it was almost as much as a man's life was worth to write a book. In those days reviewers were savages thirsting for blood, and every new writer was regarded as a public enemy.

"Friends," he said, "are like diamonds: all wish to possess them but few are willing to pay the price."

On being rebuked because of the vehement abuse of a friend, he replied that he was "only deterred from abusing him more severely by the fear of being indicted under the act for the prevention of cruelty to animals."

Again, he said: "A person who repeats to a friend an offensive observation, uttered when he is absent, is much more blamable than the person who first uttered it. Of course when said against a man's honor it is different. Then the friend should be defended and the offensive remark, if thought best, repeated."

Speaking of Sheridan, he said: "There is much more folly than vice in the world. My feelings were never more excited than when writing the 'Monody on Sheridan.' Poor Sherry! What a mind in him was overthrown by poverty."

"When the loud cry of trampled Hindoostan
Arose to heaven in her appeal to man,
His was the thunder,— his the avenging rod,
The wrath,— the delegated voice of God,
Which shook the nations, through his lips, and blazed
Till vanquished senates trembled as they praised."

Of himself he thought his misshapen foot the greatest calamity, and that it was difficult to express the corroding bitterness that deformity engendered in the mind. He believed that where malformation existed in any part of the body it always showed itself in the face, however handsome the face might be. And he also believed that nothing so completely demoralized a man as the certainty that he had lost the sympathy of his fellow-creatures. "It breaks the last tie that unites him to humanity, and renders him reckless and irreclaimable."

He called "goodness the best cosmetic," and asserted of his own productions that he could not read any one of them without detecting in it a thousand faults. Their popularity in England, he said, indicated a lack of literary judgment, and he also said that the people of the continent who admired even the translations, which were always worse than the originals, were void of all judgment.

He met a few Irishmen and highly esteemed some of them: as, for example, Moore, Curran, Sheridan, and the Earl of Blessington. He did not like Wellington though, chiefly, we think, because he had the audacity to defeat a greater man,— Napoleon. He thought

that "an Irishman,— that is, a clever Irishman,— educated in Scotland, would be perfection. The Scotch professors would prune down his overluxuriant shoots of imagination and strengthen his reason. Until that was done he would continue to be a slave to one thing or another."

"The Scotch," he said, "are a very superior race of people, with intellects more acute than the English. They are better educated and make better men of affairs."

Of English women he said: "You may make an English woman, indeed nature does this, the best wife and mother in the world, you may make her a heroine, but nothing can make her a genuine woman of fashion. Thoroughbred English gentlewomen are the most distinguished and ladylike creatures imaginable. Naturally mild and dignified, they are formed to be placed at the head of our patrician establishments; but when they quit their congenial spheres to enact the part of leaders of fashion, they bungle sadly. Their gaiety degenerates into levity, their *hauteur* into incivility, their fashionable ease and nonchalance into brusquerie, . . . and all this because they will perform parts in the comedy of life for which nature has not formed them, neglecting their own dignified character."

Byron,— like Solomon, surnamed "The Wise," why we never knew, unless it came as a result of his mistakes and at the conclusion too of an adventurous career, disgraced as it was all the way through by evil attachments,— declared that there was no happiness out-

side of matrimony, re-echoing thus the advice of the polygamous son of David. "Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, for this is thy portion in this life,"— an important "tip" this, learned as it was by both in the race-course of life, that bickering school of bitter but illuminating experience.

CHAPTER XXIX

Byron always dwelt with complacency on the advantage of rank, and claimed that "people of family are superior, and always to be recognized by a *certain air* and the smallness of their hands." He evidently did not agree with Burns that *rank* was the guinea stamp and *man* was the gold, or with his favorite Pope that "worth makes the man, the want of it the fellow," or with Tennyson that "it is only noble to be good, true hearts are more than coronets and simple faith than Norman blood."

To be well born and bred cannot be overpraised. We expect more, other things being equal, from people with pedigrees and family portraits by Gainsborough and Reynolds rather than daguerreotypes, and are usually not disappointed. Nevertheless, it is the stimulation that comes from a grapple with difficulties, rather than a family tree and quarterings, that develop the manly in man and bring to the fore the conquering qualities.

"Such a book," he said, "as Robertson's 'Charles the Fifth,' is a railroad to learning, while other histories are the neglected old turnpikes that deter us from making the trip."

"The circumstances of a man's yielding to poetry," he assured a correspondent, "is a voucher that he is no

longer of sound mind. We of the craft are all crazy, and I more than the rest. Lady Byron, dear, sensible soul, not only thought me mad, but tried to make others believe it. You will believe me what I sometimes believe myself,— mad."

Anent the above: To see a man in a fit of passion throw a favorite gold watch into the fire and pound it to atoms with a poker is enough to make any woman think him mad. And to have a poet's wife ask him when he was going to stop writing poetry! was certainly enough to make him so. She, with all her noble qualities, we might hazard the opinion, was a trifle too self-righteous; and he, with his breast, like Philomel, ever against the thorn of meretricious self-disparagement, was a trifle too lax. And thus their lives, like the rushing of the arrowy Rhine, although picturesque, were always running against snags.

It was he too who first said that "love was like measles, more dangerous when it came late in life."

On another occasion he delivered himself of the following bit of profound wisdom, worthy of Marcus Aurelius or of Seneca: "We should live with our friends as if one day we should lose them. This maxim, strictly followed, will not only render our lives happier, but will save the survivor from those pangs conjured up by memories of slights and unkindnesses offered to those we have lost when too late for atonement." He also said: "To be happy we must forget the past, since memory precludes felicity and borrows from the bygone to embitter the future." He evi-

dently had no pleasures of memory. He said he had none, and that even his childhood was filled with bitterness.

"Great imagination," he said, "is seldom accompanied by equal powers of reason. We rarely possess superiority at any one point except at the expense of another."

Speaking of Hope's "Anastasius," a now forgotten work, he said he wept bitterly over many pages of it, and for two reasons,— first, that *he* had not written it; and, secondly, that Hope had. He said that it was necessary to like a man excessively in order to pardon his having written such a book,— a book excelling all recent productions as much in wit and talent as in true pathos. He would have given his two most approved poems to have been the author of "Anastasius."

The next quotation will seem self-evident, although never before, so far as we know, expressed in this candid way: "Genius, like greatness, should be seen at a distance, for neither will bear too close an inspection. Imagine a hero of a thousand fights in his cotton night-cap, subject to the infirmities of human nature, and there is an end to his sublimity. . . . See a poet, whose works have raised our thoughts to the empyrean, blotting, tearing, rewriting the lines we thought had poured forth with Homeric inspiration; and at intervals, between the cantos and stanzas, eating, drinking, sleeping, bothering about the price of groceries, and contesting the exorbitant bills of tradespeople and mechanics, and he sinks to the common level. Such

men should live in solitude, and make their presence a rarity. They should never submit to the gratification of the animal appetite of eating in company." He also intimates that the proverbial devotion of poets to their wives is due to their imaginations' reflecting them on the magic mirror of their fancy as paragons.

Talking to a friend who had made a witty comparison, he said, "That thought of yours is pretty and just, which all pretty thoughts are not, and I shall *pop* it into my next poem."

"Nothing," he observes, "cements friendship and companionship so strongly as having read the same books and having known the same people."

Like Goethe, he was a great admirer at one time of Napoleon. In fact he was generous enough to divide the world with him, keeping the best part though to himself. Yet he said, "What I most admire in Napoleon is his want of sympathy, which proves his knowledge of humanity." Yet he, Byron, was so sympathetic himself that with all his regard for money — he said that avarice was his greatest fault — he nevertheless squandered it on needy friends, and there was nothing that appealed to him so strongly as misfortune. The wretched, the homeless and poor, including homeless dogs, were objects of his constant compassion and beneficence. He never passed a beggar on the street without casting coin into his always empty treasury, his hat. Toward the end his exalted opinion of Napoleon changed, and after his exile we find him writing:

"Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness."

"The desolator desolate,
The victor overthrown,
The arbiter of other's fate
A suppliant for his own."

"To think that God's fair earth hath been
The footstool of a thing so mean."

In a conversation about his daughter Allegra's mental qualities, he anxiously exclaimed: "Who would willingly possess genius? None, I am persuaded, who know the misery it entails, its temperament producing continual irritation, destructive alike to health and happiness. And what are its advantages? To be envied, hated, and persecuted in life and libeled in death." On another occasion he defined fame as "being killed in battle to-day and having your name spelled wrong in the *Gazette* to-morrow."

On another occasion he said: "We only know the value of our possessions when we have lost them." And again: "It is difficult when a man detests an author not to detest his works. I despise Southey and nothing that he writes is of value to me." In the "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" he calls Southey "a ballad-monger" and petitions the Lord to help him and his readers too. Yet when they met afterward,— in spite of Southey's animosity — *he* thought Byron "Satan incarnate,"— Byron admired his handsome appearance and fine conversation, and their mutual enmity to an extent ceased.

The following, which might be called a new theory of love and beauty, the reader will recognize as having something of Bernard Shaw's sometimes plausible paradox in it, "A poet endows the woman he loves with all charms, and has no need of actual beauty to fill up the picture. He should select a woman who is good rather than beautiful, leaving the latter for those who, having no imagination, require actual beauty to satisfy their taste."

He liked to compare himself, after the manner of Plutarch, with Alfieri. "We both," he says, "have *domesticated* ourselves with women of rank, are fond of animals, above all horses, like to be surrounded by birds and pets of various descriptions, are passionate lovers of liberty, are the recipients of numerous amatory letters and portraits from lady adorers. . . ."

In this connection he told a story of Alfieri who had been followed from one city to another by an infatuated noblewoman, an admirer of his genius. Finally arriving at the hotel where he stopped and finding the number of his room she entered unannounced as the poet sat writing at a table, threw her arms around his neck, and was about to express the ardor of her emotions when she discovered that she was embracing only the great man's secretary! Alfieri, entering the room at the same moment and taking in the situation at a glance,— it was not, it would seem, a new experience,— became frantically indignant and tore his hair after the most approved Italian fashion because *anyone* should make the compromising blunder, *to him*, of mistaking

anybody in the world for the greatest poet of Italy!

It was on hearing this that someone suspected Byron of being but a copy of an original he had long studied. He once refused to read a tragedy dedicated to George Byron instead of to Lord George Byron. "How stupid," he said, "to pass over my rank. I am determined not to read the tragedy, for a man capable of committing such a solecism in good breeding and *common decency* can write nothing worthy of being read."

In talking of the effect of senility on intellect he said: "When the Destroyer, Time, cannot cut people off altogether, he maims them."

Like George Bernard Shaw, though he wrote plays and was once like Goethe manager of a theater, Drury Lane, he disliked theaters and actors, and like Schiller when he could he prevented the performance of his own plays. "Manfred" he purposely wrote, he said, so that it could not be adapted to theatric representation.

Like Geoffrey Chaucer, Lord Bacon, Dr. Johnson, and G. B. Shaw, he regarded "money as the greatest thing in the world." "It makes everything possible, and its opposite, poverty, is the worst." Shaw calls poverty "wickedness and cowardice." Chaucer said it was "the mother of ruin, that is to say, the mother of overthrowing or falling down." Johnson said that "a man guilty of poverty easily believes himself suspected," while Byron insists that "money is wisdom, knowledge, power, all combined." He was fond to the point of parsimony of money; yet his charities were

frequent and liberal. When living with the Guiccioli in Venice his income was four thousand pounds a year, one thousand of which he spent in charity,— which but shows how very charitable he must have been. He gave away to the needy what to him was of supreme importance.

Nothing was much more singular about him than his views of art. He declared that he never believed people serious in their admiration of pictures, statues, and so on. He confessed that few art subjects had excited his attention and that to admire these he had been forced to draw on his imagination. Of objects of taste and vertu he was equally regardless, and antiquities had no interest for him. He carried this so far that he disbelieved the possibility of their exciting interest in any one, and said they " merely served as an excuse for indulging the vanity and ostentation of those who had no other means of attracting attention."

The next excerpt might be ascribed to Rochefoucauld rather than to the author of " The Hebrew Melodies ": " Cleverness and cunning are incompatible. I never saw them united. The latter is the natural resource of the weak. Children and people of limited mental caliber are cunning; clever people, never."

He believed in ghosts. He had no religious nor national prejudices, but, like many Englishmen, frequently tiraded against his own country. Yet if *you* attempted disparagement his patriotism rose to the bait as a trout to a fly in midsummer. So different this from the Irish. Charles Lever says, " An Irishman

will talk in extravagant praise of his country and people for hours, but if you do, he thinks you are making fun of him, and resents it."

Byron told the Countess of Blessington that in diving for a Genoese *lira* in clear but deep water — and, by the way, he could bring up coin, thimbles, eggs, and the like from the bottom, at the depth of ten feet — that he *imbibed* so much of that element through his ears that it gave him the *migraine*, not apparently taking into account the fact that his ears had drums,— impervious membranes stretched across the auricular aperture near its center,— making such a condition impossible. This reminds us of Harriet Martineau's bequeathing her ears,— external auricles,— to her family physician so that after her death he might discover the cause of her deafness. She actually thought that she heard with the external auricular appendages attached to the side of her head, one on each side for symmetry, or so that she would not have to turn around when she wanted to listen to the man on the other side. The remainder of her head she left to her friend, Dr. Combe, the craniologist, for one of the peculiar beliefs of that remarkable woman was phrenology.

Byron's letters to his mother show a very human although unromantic side of his character. And certain items in the catalogue announcing the sale at auction of his books previous to his departure for the far East,— published first in Dallas's worthless and confusing book (that cost me fifteen dollars and is not worth ten cents).

"The Prohibited Correspondence with Lord Byron,"—exhibit a fantasticality of taste amounting to superstition. For example: "Lot 151: a silver sepulchral urn made with great taste. Within it are contained human bones taken from a tomb within the long wall of Athens in the month of February, 1811. The urn weighs 187 oz., 5 dwts. Lot 152: a silver cup containing 'Root of hemlock gathered in the dark.' According to the directions of the witches in 'Macbeth' the silver cup weighs 29 oz. and 8 dwts."

The title page of this "Catalogue" is as follows: "A catalogue of books, the property of a nobleman about to leave England for the Morea, to which are added a silver sepulchral urn containing relics brought from Athens and a silver cup, the property of the same noble person, which will be sold at his (Lord Byron's) house, No. 26 Pall Mall, on Thursday and the following day." He must have had quite a large number of books. The sepulchral urn evidently not bringing the expected price he afterward presented it to Sir Walter Scott.

In a letter to his mother, first printed in the volume by Dallas, he unromantically begs her to "lay in a powerful stock of potatoes, greens, and biscuits, since he has become restricted to an entire vegetable diet, neither fish nor flesh coming within his régime."

He frequently asserted that man partook of the nature of the animals he fed upon. "Look, for example, at prize fighters," he says; "their feeding on flesh makes them as ferocious as lions." He forgot that

they did not live on lions. He was not above getting the better of the customs house officers, for he continues: "I have brought you a shawl and a quantity of attar of roses. These I must smuggle, *if possible,* but pray do not forget my diet, and take care of my books."

In these same letters from the East he tells his mother that the Pasha of Albania, after sending his compliments to her, told him that he was sure he was a man of high rank because he had small ears, curly hair, and white hands. "On the strength of which marks of distinction he gave me a guard of forty soldiers through the forests of Acarania."

CHAPTER XXX

No author was ever so popular and so antagonized during his life as he. He was both the most celebrated and the most execrated of men. As many as forty thousand copies of some of his poems were sold in a few days, yet he was hissed in the street on his way to the theater, and a certain respectable actress, because of his friendship for her, was driven into retirement. Men envied him, women of all ranks wrote him love-letters, and women of all religious persuasions prayed for the salvation of his soul. He was compared to Nero, Caligula, Heliogabalus, Henry VIII, Beelzebub, Belial, and other exponents of vice and wickedness. And "Byromania" became an epidemic.

He had to leave England because of her emphatically expressed condemnation of his conduct, his divorce being the gravest offense,— a divorce, however, that prevented him from marrying again until the death of his wife. With us, thanks to our lax laws and the greed and depravity of certain renegade clergymen, he would not have needed to go into exile nor to refrain from remarriage.

The following extracts from Moore's "Life of Lord Byron" will give the reader a general idea of his lordship's personal appearance. His handsome looks, as

everybody knows, was the theme of constant eulogy.

"Of his face the beauty may be pronounced to have been of the highest order, as combining at once regularity of features with the most varied and interesting expression. His eyes, though of a light gray, were capable of all extremes of meaning, but it was in the mouth and chin that the great beauty as well as expression of his countenance lay.

"His head was remarkably small — so much so as to be rather out of proportion with his face. The forehead, though a little too narrow, was high and appeared more so from his having his hair — to preserve it he said — shaved over the temples; while the glossy dark brown colors, clustering over his head, gave the finish to his beauty. . . . When to this was added that his nose, though handsome, was rather thickly shaped, that his teeth, like Mohammed's, were white and regular, and his complexion colorless, as good an idea perhaps as it is in the power of mere words to convey may be conceived of his features.

"In height he was, as he himself informed me, five feet, eight inches and a half. And to the length of his limbs he attributed his being such a good swimmer. His hands were very white and — according to his own notion of the size of hands — aristocratically small. The lameness of his right foot, though an obstacle to grace, but little impeded the activity of his movements; and from this circumstance, as well as from the skill with which the foot was disguised by means of long trousers, it would be difficult to conceive

a defect of this kind less obtruding itself as a deformity, while the diffidence which a constant consciousness of the infirmity gave to his first approach and address made even his lameness a source of interest."

Strange, everybody that talks of Byron talks of his lameness. Yet Scott was more of a cripple than he. One of Scott's legs was so much shorter than the other that in walking only the great toe touched the ground. A stout cane was necessary to facilitate locomotion; yet the fact of his perambulatory handicap is but seldom mentioned, while Byron's *equinus varus* is the theme of universal remark.

To the description of how Byron appeared to a man, Tom Moore, we may add by way of contrast how this "observed of all observers" emblazoned himself on the mind of a woman, the Countess of Blessington, whose so delightfully feminine "Conversations with Lord Byron" helped to place him in a more favorable light with his countrymen.

Under date of Genoa, April 1, 1823, where she formed an intellectual friendship with Lord Byron, she writes: "Saw Lord Byron for the first time. The impression for the first few minutes disappointed me. From portraits and descriptions I had fancied him taller, with a more dignified air, and I looked in vain for the hero-looking sort of person with whom I had so long identified him in my imagination. His appearance is, however, highly prepossessing; his head finely shaped, the forehead open, high, and noble; his eyes are grey and full of expression, but one is visibly

larger than the other; nose large and well shaped and looking bent in profile; his mouth is the most remarkable feature, the upper lip is Grecian in shortness, the corners descending, the lips full and finely cut. In speaking he shows his teeth very much and they are white and even, and I observed that even in his smile, and he smiles frequently, there is something of a scornful expression that is evidently natural, and not, as many suppose, affected. *He is extremely thin,* indeed so much so that his figure has almost a boyish air. His face is peculiarly pale, the paleness of ill health, and his hair, which is getting rapidly grey, is of a very dark brown and curls naturally. He uses a good deal of bear's oil on it, which makes it look still darker. His whole appearance is remarkably gentlemanlike, and he owes nothing of this to his toilet, as his coat appears to have been many years made, is made too large, and all his garments convey the idea of having been purchased ready-made, so ill do they fit him."

Anent sartorial eccentricities, in a letter to Moore, dated June 9, 1820, he writes: "Besides the vexations mentioned in my last I have incurred a quarrel with the pope's carabiniers, or *gens d'armes,* who have petitioned the cardinal against my liveries, as too nearly resembling their own *lousy* uniform. They particularly object to the epaulettes, which all the world with us have upon gala days. My liveries are of the colours conforming to my arms, and have been the family hue since the year 1066. I have sent a trenchant reply, as you may suppose." He frequently

changed his costumes. During his last visit to Greece he entered that classic country dressed in the habiliments of a Scotch highlander.

But to return to the account of the Countess of Blessington: "His voice and accents are peculiarly agreeable, but effeminate,— clear and harmonious and so distinct that though his general tone in speaking is rather low than high, not a word is lost. . . ."— Thus in effeminacy of voice Byron was like Cæsar, while Mohammed's speech was "deep, manly, beautifully modulated in public utterance, in private conversation as soft as a lute."—"I had expected to find him a dignified, cold, reserved, and haughty person, resembling those mysterious personages that he loved so to paint in his works and with whom he has been so often identified by the good-natured world. But nothing can be more different, for were I to point out the prominent defect of Lord Byron I should say it was flippancy and a total want of that natural self-possession and dignity which ought to characterize a man of birth and education."

Thus we have the *tout ensemble* of "the greatest poet since Shakespeare," as seen by different observers. Yet the two pictures are remarkably alike. His wit and humor, as everybody knows, were varied and striking, and his jokes were often at his own expense.

In discussing the merits of mutual friends with a certain lady, he laughingly asserted that they had saved him from suicide. "It was a sad period in my history," he said, "and I should positively have put

an end to myself, but that I guessed that either the one or the other of them would have written my life, and with that fear before me I lived on. For I knew that they would have penned excuses for my delinquencies as lame as myself."

Of an at one time well known poet, William Spencer, now gone into unmerited oblivion, he said, "He has just gayety enough to prevent his sentimentality from becoming lachrymose."

All through his writing Byron uses the word "clever" as a synonym for ability, as do the present day English and certain Americans who have spent two days in London on a six weeks' tour around the world. There were three men our poet never ceased to admire,— Scott, Shelley, and Tom Moore. He delighted in Scott both as a man and an author, was always pleased with his novels, read them over and over again with increasing pleasure and felt that he equaled, even surpassed Cervantes, and that in his private character he was his *ne plus ultra* of men. In talking of Scott's goodness of heart his eyes would fill with tears and his pallid face become ruddy.

Of Shelley, whom he called the "Ariel of English verse," while Shelley called him "the tempest-cleaving swan of Albion," he said to a friend: "You should have known Shelley. He was the most gentle, amiable, and the least worldly-minded person I ever met; full of delicacy, and disinterested beyond all other men. He had formed to himself a *beau ideal* of all that is high-minded and noble, and acted up to his ideal even to the

letter. He had a most brilliant imagination but a total want of worldly wisdom."

"Moore is the only poet I know," continued Byron, "whose conversation equals his writings. No one writes songs like him, sentiment and imagination are joined in the most harmonious versification, and I know no greater treat than to hear him sing his own compositions. The powerful expression he gives them and the pathos of the tones of his voice produce an effect that no other songs ever did."

Much as Byron was affected by Moore's singing his own songs, "the sentiment of which," according to N. P. Willis, "goes through your blood, warming you to the eyelids and almost breaking your heart," he was more affected by "animated conversation, which," he declared, "has much the same effect on me as champagne,—it elevates and makes me giddy, and then I say a thousand foolish things while under its intoxicating influence. I find an interesting book the only sedative to restore me again to my wonted calm."

He never wished to live long. "Life is like wine," he quoted from Sir William Temple. "He who would drink it pure must not drink it to the dregs. But let me not live to be old. Give me youth which is the fever of reason and not age which is the palsy." And on another occasion, paraphrasing Macbeth, he said: "It is painful to find oneself growing old without that which should accompany old age, as honor, love, obedience, troops of friends." He was then living in exile. "I feel this keenly, reckless as I appear,

though there are few to whom I would avow it and certainly not to a man." Yet, as we know, he died April 19, 1824, only in his thirty-ninth year, engaged "in the glorious attempt to restore Greece to her ancient freedom and renown."

CHAPTER XXXI

THE following additional peculiarities and eccentricities are gathered from various sources, for many persons were attracted to Lord Byron, and thought it their greatest glory to write his speeches and to record his actions in their books. No two seem to have seen him alike. Yet, taking them all together, they exhibit the *tout ensemble* of a man with nerves so distorted that he would seem not always responsible for what he said or did. He was altogether unlike Cæsar and Mohammed in this.

To begin, he was born in convulsions. And was not the deformity which distressed him all his days, and perhaps kept his pride, like that of the swan, from soaring beyond endurance, but a part of the neurosis that affected him through life? This condition manifested itself with greatest energy at the end of his career, to the extent of four violent seizures in ten days.

His pictures,— which he was as fond of having taken as Thomas Jefferson a hundred years ago, or the merest prima donna to-day,— especially those by G. H. Harlowe and Count D'Orsay, respectively, show the *facies epilepticus* as unmistakably as if they looked at you from the enclosure of a colony farm.

Nearly everything about him indicated the man of distorted nerves and often disordered vision.

Like Mohammed and Cæsar, he was extremely superstitious, believed in lucky and unlucky days, disliked undertaking anything on Friday, was full of apprehensions about being helped to salt at table, spilling salt, letting bread fall, or breaking a mirror. And notwithstanding his usual bravery and confidence in himself, he was as much the victim of ominous apprehension as a chlorotic girl.

In this particular "old womanish" is the epithet applied to the subsequent "Hero of Missolonghi" by Leigh Hunt.

What was his morbid love of a bad name but a mental distemper, perverted "hallucination of splendor," common to men of neurotic make-up? Thus he was in the habit of accusing himself of crimes, particularly of a certain type, and was as vulgar in the matter of discussing them as the common loafer on the street corner who knows a slander about every house in sight. And he would relate compromising confidences as complacently as if telling a pleasant winter's tale. Between snatches of songs from the frivolous opera he would relate by way of entertaining variety such family catastrophies as that his father cut his throat, and madness ran in his family, that his mother had "a devilish temper," and that while in a rage with her only son her favorite weapon was the poker. This merely to amuse or astonish his auditor.

As others cultivated the bubble reputation even in the cannon's mouth, he, some things would make it appear, exulted in infamy. Yet the majority of his

friends testified that personally they knew nothing bad about Byron "but what he said himself."

This was the element of melodrama in the patient — for we cannot get away from the notion that Byron was chronically sick. So perverted was his self-love that he did not hesitate to make himself the hero of unspeakable slander and of all sorts of iniquities, even to the extent before indicated of writing vile paragraphs against himself for foreign journals just for the fun of seeing them republished as facts in the English papers.

It was Nero and Caligula who delighted in mutilating insects and in dislocating the legs of living creatures for the pleasure of hearing them scream in pain. Byron, to the contrary, was tender to animals, was made wretched by their suffering, but delighted even in the pretense of ethical obliquities of which he was not guilty.

Like Hamlet's mother, "assuming virtues though she had them not,"— so Byron with vice. The same pathology resulting in the obtunding of delicate moral discrimination was the cause of many discrepancies of conduct.

Transitory excitements, dreamy states, anxious and conscious deliria, extremes of asceticism and excess, sudden morbid impulses, blunting of the finer feelings, fondness for the bizarre, the fantastic, and the gruesome, are often conditions for which disease, rather than morality, is responsible.

Unlike Cæsar and Mohammed, who were always

sane in the matter of things culinary,—especially Mohammed, who confined his diet to a few simple things,— Byron was absurdly and pretentiously particular, and childishly proud of it. Alexander Dyce, in his interesting volume, "The Table Talk of Rogers," tells the folowing story:

"Neither Moore nor myself had ever seen Byron, when it was settled that he should dine at my house to meet Moore. Alexander Campbell was also to be of the party. When we sat down at dinner I asked Byron if he would like soup. No, he never took soup. Would he take some fish? No, he never took fish. Presently I asked him if he would eat some mutton. No, he never ate mutton. I then asked him if he would take a glass of wine. No, he never tasted wine. It was now necessary to ask him what he did eat and drink, and the answer was, 'Nothing but hard biscuit and soda water.'

"Unfortunately neither hard biscuit nor soda water were in the house, and so he dined on potatoes bruised down on his plate and drenched with vinegar. Some days after, meeting Hobhouse,"—he who wrote the notes to "Childe Harold," and traveled with the noble lord on the continent and in the Orient,—"I said to him, 'How long will Lord Byron persevere in his present diet?' He replied, 'Just as long as you notice it.' I did not then know what I know to be a fact now,—that Byron, after leaving my house, had gone to a club in St. James Street and had eaten a hearty meat supper."

It would be interesting, if there were not too much travail of soul without it, just as one runs through a bazaar for curios, to roam through Byron's writings for descriptions of swoons, bursts of abnormal passion and violence, faintings, ecstasies, enthusiasms of a moment, silent rages, syncopes, and other occasional concomitants of epileptic dyscrasia scattered here and there through his poetry and prose. And nearly always these descriptions are autobiographic. They might discover the heart of his mystery, and reveal his psychosis.

Just one illustration, and that from "Mazeppa," occurs to me as a very good poetic description of an epileptic seizure as evidently experienced by its author, although given as an account of the feelings experienced by a man tied to the back of a runaway horse, who had found relief in unconsciousness.

"The earth gives way; The sky rolls round;
I seem to sink upon the ground.
. . . . . .
My heart turned sick, my brain grew sore
And throbbed awhile, then beat no more.
. . . . . .
The sky spun like a mighty wheel,
I saw the trees like drunkards reel
And a light flash [the aura] sprang o'er my eyes
Which saw no further. He who dies
Can die no more than then I died.
I felt the blackness come and go,
And strove to wake, but could not make
My senses climb up from below."

The first two and the last two lines are luminously de-

scriptive of the fall or sinking to the earth, which gives the disease its common name of the " falling sickness." The last two lines tell of the ineffectual struggle before the dénouement of unconsciousness and convulsions. The poet stops short there, because that is the only stage of an attack that the victim knows nothing about. Thus in this graphic account he carried you to the very edge of the river of epileptic oblivion before making the final plunge into its lethe-like turbulence.

His inordinate vanity, both of looks and capacity, was almost, if not quite, cachexia of the same web that carried within its warp and woof obtuse moral discrimination, lameness, grobian excesses,—epilepsy.

It is difficult to conceive of the self-assurance of a writer who would not keep a copy of Shakespeare in his house, for fear that it might be thought that he wrote like him as a matter of mere imitation. This was so different from Goethe's refusing at last to read Shakespeare because he made him,— Goethe,— seem insignificant. He, Goethe,— Olympian though he was, — confessed that the reading of Shakespeare made him think of himself as the merest dwarf in comparison.

Not only Byron's ability but his appearance, except his foot or feet,— for the number is a matter of dispute,— was a subject of self-satisfied complacency. He attached so much importance to the etiolation of his hands, which were indeed as pallid as his complexion, that in order to prevent the winds of heaven from visiting them too roughly he constantly kept them encased in gloves. Leigh Hunt tells us of

his delicate white hands, of which he was proud; and he attracted attention to them, he further adds, by rings.

Thus he anticipated N. P. Willis,— and also D'Israeli,— who, besides adorning himself with elaborate gold chains around the neck, wore conspicuously begemmed rings on his fingers, even outside his gloves. "Byron thought a delicately white hand," Hunt tells us, "almost the only mark remaining nowadays of a gentleman. He often appeared holding a handkerchief upon which his bejeweled fingers lay embedded as in a picture." See Philips' beautiful portrait, the picture we have designated as the one with the calla-lily collar. Byron never wore such a collar, any more than Napoleon looked like a demi-god; they were only dressed so for purposes of picturesque portraiture.

"His lordship was also as fond of fine linen as a Quaker," the author of "The Story of Rimini" continues, "and had the remnant of his hair oiled and trimmed with all the anxiety of a Sardanapalus."

"The visible character to which this effeminacy gave rise," says the same writer,— who must have owed Byron money,— "appears to have indicated itself as early as his travels in the Levant, when the Grand Seignior is said to have taken him for a woman." He was thus as particular about his hands as Cæsar was of his skin, or Mohammed about ablutions and pleasant odors.

"His are the smallest male hands I ever saw," says

the Countess of Blessington, "finely shaped, delicately white, and his finger nails are like pink sea-shells."

He had two terrors,— growing fat and going mad, — and in case of being compelled to make a choice he tells us which he would choose.

His selection of biscuit and vinegar and other dietary degeneracies was to keep his form within the precious dimensions of an "*Adonis of loveliness*"— to borrow the epithet for applying which to the Prince Regent Hunt went to jail — and what he lacked in admiration for his Silenus foot he made up for in gratified contemplation of his Hebe-like hands and otherwise general pulchritude.

Thus even conceit has its compensations, and what we lack in grace is made up in fancy.

There are so many conflicting statements about his personal appearance,— and that too by persons of trained observation,— that you think of him as not one man but as many men.

One of the many who immortalized themselves by painting his portrait said that "he was a bad sitter, and assumed a countenance that did not belong to him, as if he were thinking of a frontispiece for 'Childe Harold.'"

Sir Archibald Allison — see "Autobiography"— says: "Byron was always aiming at effect, and the effect he desired was rather that of fashion than of genius; he sought rather to astonish than to impress. He seemed blasé with every enjoyment of life, affected rather the successful roué than the great poet, and

deprecated beyond everything the cant of morality."

On the other hand, James Gillman, writing to Coleridge,— see "Life of Coleridge,"— says:

"If you had seen Lord Byron you could scarcely disbelieve him in anything. So beautiful a countenance I scarcely ever saw. His teeth, so many stationary smiles; his eyes, the open portals of the sun,— things of light and for light; and his forehead, so ample, yet so flexible, passing from marble smoothness into a hundred wreathes and lines and dimples, corresponding to the feelings and sentiments he is uttering."

Almost as extreme — this — as Castellar.

Trelawny, who lived with Byron and Shelley in Italy, and who wrote "Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron," says:

"In external appearance Byron realized that ideal standard with which imagination adorns genius. . . . Nature could do little more than she had done for him, both in outward form and in the inward spirit she had given to animate it." Trelawny thought, though, that "his lameness certainly helped to make him cynical, skeptical, and savage."

It may be interesting to physicians to know that the deformity, which seems to have been of the left foot,— *talipus varus* — due to the contraction of the tendon Achilles, was congenital and evidently was allied to his epilepsy. Some have given their opinion that the lameness was hardly noticeable. Trelawny, for example, who often swam with him, writes that "both feet

were clubbed, and his legs withered to the knees, exhibiting the form and features of an Apollo with the feet and legs of a sylvan satyr."

This, though,— for it makes an unpleasant picture, — is an unhappy impression to be received *cum grano salis* as written by a man who regarded Byron with repugnance, as a dangerous mischief-maker. "His wit and humor might force a grim smile, or a hollow laugh," he wrote, "but they savored more of pain than playfulness."

Notwithstanding what the Countess of Blessington said of the effeminacy of his voice, Captain Medwyn, in his extravagant "Recollections," tells us that his lordship's voice "had a flexibility, a variety in its tones, a power and a pathos, beyond any I have known."

Thus his chameleonlike character, mannerisms, and eccentricities,—for much of which, unlike Cæsar and Mohammed, his peculiar psychosis or neurosis was responsible,— makes uniformity of description impossible. No two persons agreed either about his character or appearance, but all are united in admiration of his powerful poetic faculty and great mental force.

Yet, are we justified in making his pathology or parentage responsible for his sins?

It has been said in extenuation of his conduct by the always interesting Taine that "his debaucheries in Italy were merely a protest against English prudery." Trash!

His debaucheries were simply depravity, Satan in

him, the hope of worldly glorification, and cannot be blamed on anyone but himself.

The subject of vicarious iniquity is, or ought to be, out of date.

"My mother made me go to church when a child, therefore I hate it as a man," is the excuse of unbelief and irreverence the world over; and so callous are we as sometimes to believe it.

The coward disclaims his guilt, charging it on some accident of birth or training, and imagines himself excused. We have so much of this flimsy reasoning.

"The licentiousness of the Restoration was due to the overrighteousness of the Puritans"; the laxity of disgraceful sons and daughters, to the religious rigidity of the home; the inebriety of chronic alcoholics is always caused by drunken progenitors, even if we have to go back to remote generations to find them. It is never *us*. We? — diamonds in cotton, but for the setting of some compromising heredity. And thus we play the fools with Time while the spirits of the wise sit in the clouds and mock us.

Judging from the looks of many of Byron's inamoratas, it was not necessary that they should possess such faces as "launched a thousand ships, and burnt the topless towers of Ilium." In a pinch any face, it would seem, would do. The poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling sees even in the blemished face beauty that is invisible to others.

Indeed he argued, as we remember, that a poet did not need beauty in a wife or sweetheart like other peo-

ple. Leave that to prosier men, he said, for the poet by his superior imagination could produce beauty at command, and by the mere might of fancy transform the plainest woman into a paragon.

In Frederick Harrison's latest addition to his familiar "Among My Books,"— see the *English Review,* April, 1912,— talking in a rather lukewarm way about such a torrid playwright as Alfieri, he writes, "There is no touch of tenderness in him and hardly a real lover occurs, even in the humble dénouement of 'Mirra,' which threw Byron into an *epileptic* fit, . . ."

The reader will remember that Edmund Kean in Massinger's "Sir Giles Overreach" also threw Byron into convulsions, and Mrs. Siddons in "Lady Macbeth" in Edinburgh threw his mother into such a state that she had to be carried out in epileptic convulsions and came near putting an end to the play. And indeed it would seem by the frequency with which Byron's fits as well as his mother's were mixed up with contemporary drama that when a critic wanted to say anything startling and picturesque about it, he did so by saying that it threw some member of the Byron or Gordon family into spasms, as if in doing that it had attained the zenith of dramatic impressiveness.

This is indeed a new way of being related to literature, but it at least has the attractiveness of novelty.

As we have hinted, according to Arthur MacDonald — see "Abnormal Man," page 150 — our poet

" was born in convulsions," and we may add in sin did his mother conceive him, for his father was a drunkard and libertine and his mother had " nerves." Molière, Charles Dickens, Charles V, and Peter the Great also had fits, but only during childhood. Thus the reflex spasms of infancy may usually be prevented from developing into chronic epilepsy.

Byron, like Cæsar, his brother in similarity of affliction, in spite of it had what Virgil calls an unconquerable yearning for fame. Like Cæsar in other ways too, Byron was as wicked as the Prince or the Princess of the Pit could wish him; in others still, good enough to delight the heart of the Recording Angel.

It seems to us that if Byron had lived longer his convulsions would have become more frequent, and his life would have ended in insanity and suicide, for the reader may remember his exhibiting homicidal and suicidal impulses.

Lady Byron after their separation lived a retired life devoted to good works. Their daughter Ada, as her father wrote of her, born in bitterness and nurtured in convulsions, was married to the Earl of Lovelace, July 8, 1835, and died November 29, 1852. Some of her letters may be found in " Crabbe Robinson's Diary." She spent a large part of her income in charity. If there were other heirs they are unknown to me.

We have felt how interesting it would be to know what Dr. Johnson would have said about the author of " Heaven and Earth " and " Cain " and " Don Juan "

and "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" while installing him in the Pantheon of British Poets: whether he would have regarded his eccentricities and heterodoxies both of speech and conduct as the result of an abnormal nervous system and other misfortunes; whether he would have branded him with the stigmata of degeneracy and put him in the pillory of scathing but pompous denunciation, or whether,— more likely,— as he did the bar-sinistered Savage, he would have taken him with all his faults to his bosom and called him with Goethe "the" greatest Englishman since Shakespeare.

We may be sure that Byron would have taken to Ursa Major. He liked bears, judging from what we know about him while at Oxford, and a favorite book with him was "Johnson's Lives of the British Poets," which he read first as a boy and continued to admire to the end, it being one of the books from which he most frequently quoted.

Yet, so important is the bubble reputation, that if Byron, as we have read somewhere, had done what Johnson in the extravagant liberality of his heart did, that is, entertain in his house, sometimes at the same time, four women besides a few indigent men,— Mrs. Williams, a poor poetess: Miss Carter and Mrs. McCaulay, "two ladies who must have looked strangely at each other," says Leigh Hunt; Mrs. Gardner, the wife of a tallow-chandler on Snow Hill, "not in the learned way," said Mrs. Barber, "but a good, worthy woman," — if Byron had done this, the world would never have heard the end of it. And Byron himself, so abnor-

mally perverse, as the mood took him, might have reported it as an illustration of moral incorrigibility. Johnson, unlike Byron in one way, never lost sight of the dignity of goodness, and resembled him in another in that he did not confine his attentions to the noble and amiable, since persons obnoxious to others, in various ways, on that very account became objects of his beneficence.

Byron was fond of display — but not in the way of saintship — even to the trappings of luxury, and he would have them though tawdry, says the Countess of Blessington. He dwelt with much complacency on the four coal black horses and magnificent harness that drew the private carriage of Count Gamba, the accommodating Italian nobleman already introduced, who lent Byron his wife, and rented him apartments in his palace. Yet, with all the facility for love-making, and with all the pageantry and splendor of a wealthy noble house, Byron ungallantly abandoned it all at last, and, as it would seem, at the call to arms of another variety.

CHAPTER XXXII

In otherwise precocious affairs of the heart, Byron was said by an enthusiastic German critic, because of the earliest one of them, to be on a level with Dante, which would be like saying that his having red hair put him into the same class with Queen Elizabeth and Kit Marlow. The curious in such matters will remember that Dante when nine years old fell in love with a girl a year younger and that he adored this one person, or abstraction, to the end of his days. Byron in this was like fifty Dantes, except that he did not burden the soul of a weary world by writing tediously mystic *vitas nuovas* about them. His method of commemoration was rather through the instrumentality of a poem.

His multiple attachments even in boyhood, which his many biographers have thought of importance enough to be put upon record, I allude to because of the key they offer to the solution of his difficult psychology, and because of the canvas they present for the display of his many parts, almost from mewing infancy to the time of his seeking the bubble reputation at the cannon's mouth at the end of his tragedy. His love-affairs in boyhood were almost frequent enough to be designated by Roman numerals like kings. Mary, not Beatrice, was a favorite name with

him. He even, we believe, liked the Welsh song "Mary Ann," because that was the name of so many of his juvenile sweethearts.

There are at least five Marys in the list of his youthful infatuations, and future research may discover others, maids somewhat of the mist some of them, but still all but one real enough for identification. The first Mary's other name was Duff, in spite of which in his ninth year he became so enamoured that he could not bear to be absent from her without counting the hours and minutes. And a few years afterward, being distant from her, even when the intensity of his ardor, you might imagine, had subsided, on being told by his mother of her marriage, he lost consciousness and almost fell in a fit. Such attacks of *petit mal* were frequent throughout his life. This was the affair which an admiring German critic, after the matter of fact manner of his hair-splitting race, said "put him on a level with Dante."

Then there was Mary, "the heiress of Annesley," before mentioned, according to Moore the most profound and enduring of all his attachments,— an attachment, notwithstanding his biographer's asseveration to the contrary, that *was* renewed after many years, but tragically, too compromisingly so to be mentioned in detail.

Among the Marys following like the procession of Banquo's heirs in "Macbeth" must be included "Mary of Aberdeen," the third Mary. Then there was Mary, fourth in the list, whom, for lack of a better name, we

will call Mary of Cambridge, the sprightly young creature who dressed as a boy and accompanied him on his rambles when he was disguised as a gypsy. At the time he was supposed to be a student at the university, and this episode was nearly the cause of his expulsion. After it was discovered the foolish girl was dismissed in disgrace, and for a time her place in his affections was taken by a tame bear, which slept in his room, played havoc with the furniture, and which he led around the town on a chain, to the amusement and terror of the alarmed inhabitants.

Finally there was a fifth. Mary of the golden fleece we shall call her, because of the color of her hair. A ringlet of her orange-tawny tresses he for a long time — for him — carried in a locket near his heart. He exhibited occasionally, as a great favor to his familiars, a miniature of this golden-haired unknown — for she has not yet been identified by Byron specialists — which he wore suspended around his neck, as Edwin Booth as Hamlet carried the counterfeit presentment of his poisoned father, and kissed it just as ostentatiously. Then there were the Margarets. I will mention but one. Parker was her other name. She kept him awake and inconsolable during "the twelve long and weary hours which elapsed between their meetings." A poem written about Margaret Parker after her death from an injury constituted, he said, "his first dash into poetry."

He immortalized and glorified each of his idols in a poem, declaring them all, after his melodramatic man-

ner, " gems of the first water." Commonplace enough they might have appeared to us, for the poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling, often gives to airy nothingness a local habitation and a name.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Dr. Madden, in "The Infirmities of Genius," writing about Byron, says: "If feelings of delicacy induced Byron's biographers to conceal a truth they were aware of, or deemed it better to withhold, their motive was a good one, but it was nevertheless a mistaken delicacy, for there are no infirmities so humiliating to humanity as irregularities of conduct are in eminent individuals. . . . That Byron labored under a specific malady which gravely affected the mental faculties and influenced, if it did not determine, his conduct on very many occasions is a fact as obvious as his defects. . . . His epilepsy he thinks was hereditary, due rather to his mother, also subject to epileptic seizure, than to his father who was more than likely only a chronic alcoholic."

The opposite of this has been observed by some medical writers, among others Eccheveria, who wrote the first book on epilepsy in America, and who declares that chronic inebriation on the part of the parents or parent is more likely to produce epilepsy in the child than epilepsy itself is.

Byron seems to have had many attacks of *petit mal* from infancy, with an occasional attack of *grand mal,* but he was not as much of a victim of the disease as either Cæsar or Mohammed. Yet he was enough of

a victim of epilepsy to keep him in constant suspense.

Hobhouse, his familiar friend and author of the elaborate notes to "Childe Harold," mentions attacks of *petit mal* on the part of his friend which he called "swoons." Byron describes these attacks as "a sort of gray giddiness first, then nothingness, and total loss of consciousness." In a letter from Bologna in 1819 he writes: "Last night I went to the representation of Alfieri's 'Mirra,' the last two acts of which threw me into convulsions. I do not mean by that word a lady's hysterics, but an agony of reluctant tears and the choking shudder which I do not often undergo for fiction." This is about all, not always that much, that the patient would know of an attack of epilepsy. He had also, according to Dallas, attacks of hysteric laughter without merriment, which he could neither understand nor control. He was also as susceptible to noises as Mohammed was to odors. He could not endure the ringing of bells, he bribed his garrulous but melodious neighbors while in Leghorn to keep quiet, and failing in this he retaliated by making worse noises himself. Everything that ingenuity could invent to make a racket he employed.

In his boyhood we are told that the most trivial accident was capable of producing deprivations of sense and motion, when he would stand still for some time, lost in unconsciousness.

"His disease," says Captain Perry, who knew him intimately, "was epilepsy, and arose from indiscretion in diet." Fletcher, his confidential servant for a num-

ber of years, on a certain occasion excusing him from company, said of his master, "He has but very recently recovered from a violent attack of epilepsy which has left him weak." Galt, in describing one of Byron's seizures, says: "He was sitting in Colonel Stanhope's room, talking jestingly with Captain Perry, according to his wonted manner, when his eyes and forehead discovered that he was agitated by strong feelings; he suddenly complained of weakness of the legs, then rose, but finding himself unable to walk, he called for aid, and immediately fell into a violent convulsion and was placed on a bed. While the fit lasted his face was hideously distorted, but in a few minutes the convulsion ceased and he began to recover his senses; his speech returned and he soon rose, apparently well. During this struggle his strength was preternaturally augmented, and when it was over he behaved with his usual firmness." This is as good a description of an ordinary attack of epilepsy as if written by Hippocrates himself. Another description of an attack we take from an eye-witness. "There was an unusual flush in his face and from the rapid change of his countenance we saw he was suffering under some nervous agitation. He complained of being thirsty, and calling for some cider drank it. He arose from his seat but was unable to walk. . . . In another minute his teeth were closed, his speech and sense gone, and he was in strong convulsions. . . . The fit, however, was as short as it was violent; in a few minutes his speech and senses returned; his features, though still pale and

haggard, resumed their natural shape, and no effect remained from the attack but excessive weakness."

At intervals during his entire life he felt, as Curran said he felt before his death, a mountain of lead upon his heart. He suffered much from headache, probably due to nocturnal attacks of epilepsy, as the morning headache of many people is due to unconscious nightly seizures, occurring often in sleep. Byron was constantly apprehensive of insanity and was afraid that, like Swift, he would die first at the top. His hypochondria in its protean manifestations was known to all his friends and was the cause often of his irregularities and caused him to write in his journal, "I awake every morning in actual despair and despondency."

His first epileptic seizure in Greece, says Jeaffreson in "The Real Lord Byron," was after his first disappointment there. It was in the presence of several witnesses who observed the effort he made to gain command of himself on the subsidence of the convulsion. This fit, Fletcher said, "ran its course in about fifteen minutes." The attacks became more frequent it would seem while he was pursuing his military expedition in Greece. After describing the first seizure there, an anonymous writer in the *Westminster Review* for 1824, article "Lord Byron in Greece," says: "In the course of the month the attacks were repeated four times. In fact the poet had five epileptic fits in fifteen days."

It was while suffering from these ominous and quickly successive seizures in a strange land and

among a people that were a disappointment to him and whose language and lack of capacity he did not know — for he only knew classic Greek and then only on the printed page, and not well even then — that he wrote the sad unfinished letter to his sister mentioned by Moore, in which he alludes so touchingly to his young life.

It soon became apparent that he had caught his death. Bleeding was suggested to allay the fever, after the good old Sangrado method. Byron held out against it, quoting though with his usual wit and energy Dr. Reid to the effect that "less slaughter is effected by the lance than the lancet, that minute instrument of mighty mischief." The next morning one of the consulting physicians, Dr. Milligan, caused him to submit to depletion by suggesting the possible loss of reason, when throwing out his arm he cried: "There! You are, I see, a d——d set of butchers! Take what you please and be done with it." The next morning he was "blooded" again with the addition of blisters, when, being exposed for the application of the counter-irritant, he manifested anxiety that his deformed foot should not be exposed. "On the 18th," says Mr. Nichols, "he saw more doctors, but was manifestly sinking, amid the tears and lamentations of attendants who could not understand one another's language."

The things dearest to a man often recur to his mind at death. "In his last hours his delirium," says the same writer, "bore him to the field of battle." He

fancied he was leading the attack on Lepanto, and was heard exclaiming, "Forward! Forward! Follow me!" The stormy vision passed and his troubled mind, like a wounded stag to his thicket, wandered across the sea to his far-away home, his own country and people.

We have but a few phrases with which to reconstruct his last days of despondency, uttered during the lucid moments occurring between the intervals of delirium. Almost his last words were, "Oh, my poor, dear child!" A pause. "My dear Ada." Then uncomprehended mutterings. "My dear sister Augusta." Then, after an interval of stertorous breathing, getting closer to the valley of the shadow of death, "And you will go to — Lady Byron, Fletcher, and tell her everything — you are friends with her." Then, "My wife, my child, my sister, Io lascio qualche cosa di caro nel mondo." "All is over," he said. "I hope not," said Fletcher, "but the Lord's will be done." "Yes, not mine," said Byron, "for the rest I am content to die." At six on the evening of the 19th of April, 1824, he had uttered his last word, his chin dropped to his breast, his eyes opened, and all was over with the man, many of whose shortcomings were the result of disease and misfortune rather than of depravity. Stanhope wrote, on hearing the news, "England has lost her brightest genius; Greece, her noblest friend."

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